Hezekiah Webb

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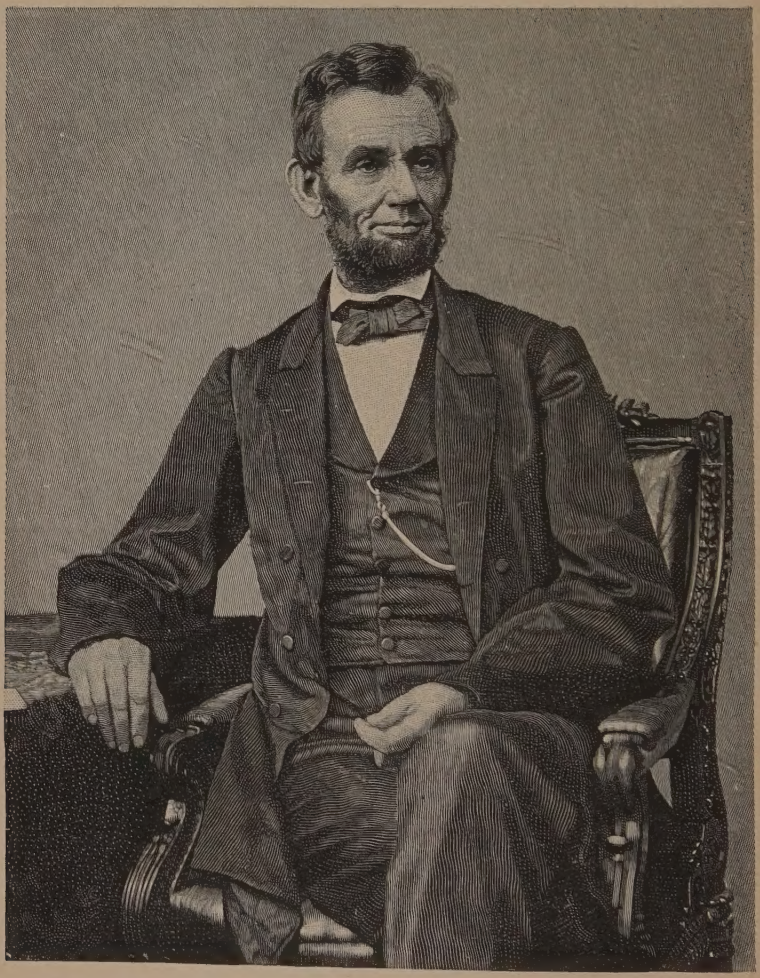

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

(From a rare photograph taken November 15, 1863. Now engraved for the first time.)

MEN OF ACHIEVEMENT

# STATESMEN

BY

NOAH BROOKS

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1894

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TROW DIRECTORY
PRINTING AND BOOKBINDING COMPANY
NEW YORK

In the preparation of this work the author's aim has been to present a series of character sketches of the eminent persons selected for portraiture. These selections of subjects have been made for the purpose of placing before the present generation of Americans salient points in the careers of public men, whose attainments in statesmanship were the result of their own individual exertions and force of character rather than of fortunate circumstances. Therefore, these brief studies are not biographies. The author had the good fortune of personal acquaintance with most of the statesmen of the latter part of the period illustrated by his pen; and he considers it an advantage to his readers that they may thus receive from him some of the impressions which these conspicuous personages made upon the mental vision of those who heard and saw them while they were living examples of nobility of aim and success of achievement in American statesmanship.

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Henry Clay.

# STATESMEN

## I.

## HENRY CLAY.

When Abraham Lincoln was forty-three years old, that is to say in 1852, he was invited by the citizens of Springfield, Ill., to deliver a eulogy on Henry Clay, who had just died. Among other things, Lincoln said of the man whom he had idolized through life: "His example teaches us that one can scarcely be so poor but that, if he will, he can acquire sufficient education to get through the world respectably." In this regard Clay and Lincoln were not much unlike. Both were born into a lot of poverty; both rose to high distinction in the State. It may be said, however, that the poverty of Lincoln's boyhood was more abject and his lot harder than Clay's.

Henry Clay was early known as the Mill Boy of the Slashes. In later years, when he was a candidate for the Presidency, this title was the slogan of a hot political canvass and was thought to be worth to Clay a great many votes. His mother was a widow living in a low and swampy district of Virginia known as the Slashes. As a

lad, Henry was often sent to Daricott's mill, on the Pamunkey River, riding on horseback, with corn to be ground or meal to be brought home for the family of seven boys and girls. The neighborhood along the route of the boy's frequent travel knew the future statesman as the Mill Boy of the Slashes.

There is a tradition that Mrs. Clay, who was left a widow in 1781, in the thick of the war of the Revolution, when Henry was four years old, was surprised one day by a visit from General Tarleton on one of his raids through Virginia. He threw on the table a handful of gold and silver in payment for property taken by his men, and it is told of the widow, that as soon as Tarleton had gone, she high-spiritedly swept up the coin and threw it into the fire. She might better have kept the money, for the family were very poor.

Many years afterward, at a Fourth of July dinner at Campbell Court House, Va., one Robert Hughes gave this toast: "Henry Clay: he and I were born close to the Slashes of old Hanover; he worked barefoot, and so did I; he went to mill, and so did I; he was good to his mother, and so was I. I know him like a book and love him like a brother." And a year earlier than this, at a dinner at Lexington, Ky., in honor of him by his old friends and neighbors, Clay said: "In looking back upon my origin and progress through life I have great reason to be thankful. My father died in 1781, leaving me an infant of too tender years to re-

tain any recollection of his smiles or endearments. My surviving parent removed to this State in 1792, leaving me, a boy of fifteen years of age, in the office of the High Court of Chancery in the city of Richmond, without guardian, without pecuniary means of support, to steer my course as I might or could. A neglected education was improved by my own irregular exertions without the benefit of systematic instruction. I studied law, principally in the office of a lamented friend, the late Governor Brooke, then Attorney-General of Virginia, and also under the auspices of the venerable and lamented Chancellor Wythe, for whom I had acted as amanuensis. I obtained a license to practice the profession from the judges of the Court of Appeals of Virginia and established myself in Lexington in 1797, without patrons, without the favor or countenance of the great or opulent, without the means of paying my weekly board, and in the midst of a bar uncommonly distinguished by eminent members. I remember how comfortable I thought I should be if I could make one hundred pounds, Virginia money, per year, and with what delight I received the first fifteen shillings fee. My hopes were more than realized. I immediately rushed into a successful and lucrative practice."

What were the achievements of this poor Mill Boy of the Slashes? He was elected to the General Assembly of the Kentucky Legislature in 1803, appointed to the United States Senate to fill a vacancy in that same year; again elected

to the Assembly and chosen Speaker of the House in 1807; again sent to the United States Senate to fill an unexpired term in 1809; elected to the House of Representatives of the United States in 1811, and five times chosen Speaker of the House; United States Peace Commissioner to Ghent in 1814; re-elected to Congress the next year; retired from public life for a brief

The House in which Henry Clay was Born.

period to retrieve his fortunes; returned to the Senate in 1823; Secretary of State under John Quincy Adams; again in the Senate in 1831; re-elected to the Senate in 1836; resigned his seat in 1842; nominated for the Presidency in 1839 and 1844, and re-elected to the Senate in the year 1849. This was the career that opened before the lad who rode to mill from the Slashes and acquired the elements of a common-school education in a log school-house near his birthplace.

His mother married a second time, and his

stepfather, Captain Henry Watkins, a resident of Richmond, started him in life in a retail store in the city of Richmond, but within a year his bookish habits, his divine thirst for knowledge, and his astonishing facility for acquiring almost every variety of information so aroused the admiration of the stepfather that the lad was found a place in the office of the clerk of the High Court of Chancery. Here was where he made his first real beginning in public life. He was tall, raw-boned, and lank, with a countenance pleasing but not handsome; and he was clad in garments of homespun which did not improve his personal appearance in the eyes of the town lads among whom he took his place at a desk where he began copying papers.

Later on, when he left Richmond to seek his fortune in Kentucky, then the Far West of the country, Clay did not make his way into conditions of very high civilization. Kentucky was still known as the "Dark and Bloody Ground" of Daniel Boone and the wild aborigines whom he fought; and although the city of Lexington was a centre of social enlightenment for those days and in those regions, it was, as compared with Richmond, a crude and unkempt community. Some years later, in 1814, Amos Kendall, who had migrated from New England to Kentucky in search of profitable employment, wrote in his diary: "I have, I think, learned the way to be popular in Kentucky, but do not as yet put in it practice. Drink whiskey and talk loud with the fullest confidence and you will

hardly fail of being called a clever fellow." But through all these early and boisterous scenes of Clay's life we find him reading—perpetually reading. As he, himself, has said, he lacked that scholarly discipline and system of acquiring knowledge which is essential to the best mental training; but he absorbed knowledge with great avidity and certainly did make the most of his opportunities. Through life, however, Henry Clay appears to have been somewhat superficial, and those who have studied his character and have noted how great were his attainments, and with what skill his genius seized upon such stores of learning as he had, must needs regret that so great a mind could not have been more thoroughly trained and better equipped for the great duties which Henry Clay in his lifetime undertook. His appeared to be a mental disposition of intuitions and instincts. He felt rather than knew; he divined men's thoughts and purposes, and his great eloquence was always directed to their imaginations, their prejudices, and their passions, rather than to their understanding.

As a jury lawyer he was always eminently successful. His eloquence, especially in his early life in Kentucky, was regarded as something phenomenal, and it is said of him that no malefactor who had him for a defender was ever convicted. His presence was commanding, his figure tall, graceful, and distinguished. His gestures were large and sweeping, and his manner of address was broad and free. His voice was

melodious, with a prodigious range, sinking into the lowest basso-profundo or rising in shrill and almost feminine notes. The music of his voice is represented as being something wonderful.

Most of his early practice was in the criminal

The School-house of the Slashes.

courts of Kentucky, and the most remarkable of these cases was one in which Clay was engaged to defend a Mrs. Phelps, wife of a respectable farmer, who was accused of the crime of murder, having killed her sister-in-law, Miss Phelps, with a musket, which in a moment of passion she seized and fired, aiming at her victim's head. It was impossible to deny that Mrs. Phelps had

killed Miss Phelps, but the criminal was a woman of a respectable family, the wife of a respectable man, and never before accused of any fault. Clay's theory was that the deed had been committed in a moment of "temporary delirium," and on that plea the jury, whose judgment had been confused by the extraordinary plea of the advocate, found that the woman was not sane enough to be hanged, but was insane enough to be kept in jail for a short time. This is probably the first instance of "temporary insanity" being used in the criminal courts of the United States to secure the acquittal of an undoubted murderer. In another case, that of one Willis, of Fayette County, accused of a murder of peculiar atrocity, Clay succeeded in dividing the jury so that they could not agree, and the defendant escaped conviction. At the second trial of Willis, Clay argued that his client had once been put in peril for his life and under the constitution of the State could not be placed in jeopardy a second time. This being new doctrine to the Court, Clay was forbidden to proceed on that line of argument, whereupon the young lawyer solemnly gathered up his papers and stalked out of the room, throwing upon the Court in grave tones the responsibility of denying his just rights to a man on trial for his life. The Court, astounded by this unexpected turn of affairs, sent a messenger after Clay, who graciously returned and secured from the jury a verdict of not guilty. Years afterward, the culprit whom Clay had defended so successfully,

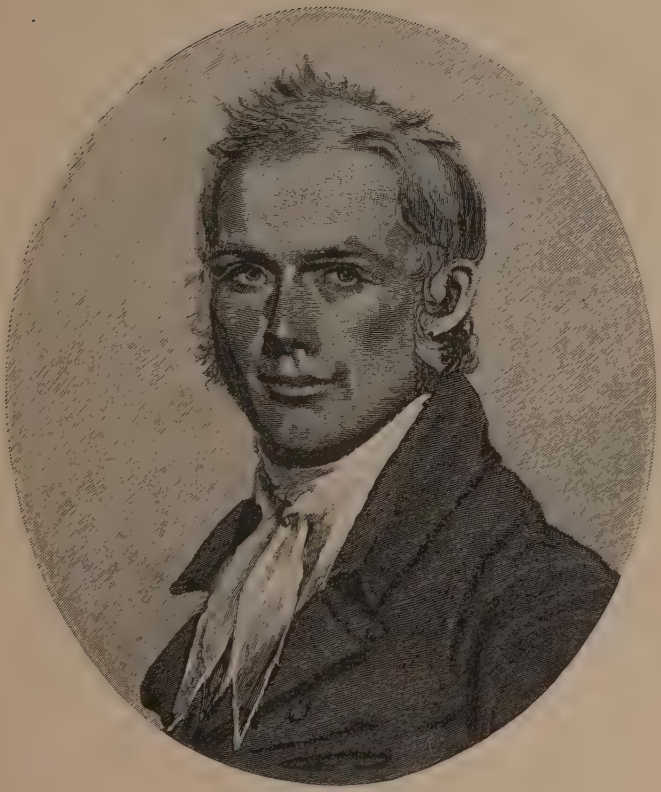
met his counsel, being intoxicated, and cried, "Here comes Mr. Clay, who saved my life." "Ah, Willis, poor fellow," said Clay, "I fear I have saved too many like you who ought to be hanged."

Clay excelled in sarcasm of finer touch than those who were his compeers in Kentucky were accustomed to employ. On one occasion, when confronted in the House of Representatives by a General Smyth, of Virginia, in a long debate, Smyth, who was noted for his prosy and long-drawn speeches, said to Clay, "You speak for the present generation; I speak for posterity." "Yes," replied Clay, "and you seem resolved to continue speaking until your audience arrives." In one of his speeches, giving a graphic description of the arrival in Washington of a horde of office-seekers on the advent of Andrew Jackson to power, he said: "Recall to your recollection the 4th of March, 1829, when the lank, lean, famished forms from fen and forests and the four quarters of the Union gathered together in the halls of patronage, or, stealing by evening's twilight into the apartment of the President's mansion, cried out, with ghastly faces and in sepulchral tones, 'Give us bread, give us Treasury pap, give us our reward.' England's bard was mistaken. Ghosts will sometimes come, called or uncalled."

Clay's popularity was very great. Even now it is a tradition throughout the Southwest, and living men, tottering on the verge of the grave, recall his eloquence, his delightful and winning

presence, his gracious ways and his great political disappointments, with feelings of mingled grief and enthusiasm. His affluence of phrase, his resonance of language and magnificence of gesture gave him a power over the minds of men that probably has never been equalled by any American of any time. His noble and generous heart, his sympathetic nature, and his exuberant vitality made him everywhere a welcome guest and an idolized friend and political leader. When he was defeated for the Presidency by James K. Polk, in 1844, the grief of his followers was so great that in those portions of the country where his vote was strongest one would have supposed a great national calamity had settled upon the people. Abraham Lincoln was one of those who idolized Clay, and he never forgot the profound sorrow that overwhelmed him when, to their utter amazement, he and his neighbors learned that Henry Clay was defeated for the Presidency.

Such was the turbulence of Clay's political career that those who are old enough to recall even the traditions of his memorable contests invariably remember two grave charges that were freely bandied during his political campaigns. He was held up to public execration, especially in the North, as a duellist and a gambler. His first experience in the duello was provoked by the insulting conduct of Colonel Joseph Hamilton Daviess, one of the magnates of Kentucky, who was then District Attorney of the United States. In the course of a suit in which Clay defended a



Henry Clay between Thirty and Forty.

(Engraved by D. Nichols, from a miniature in possession of John M. Clay, Esq.)

man who had provoked the wrath of Daviess, Clay was notified by Daviess that he had better desist from his defence. Clay promptly replied that he would permit no one to dictate to him as to the performance of his duty and that he "held himself responsible" after the manner of the code. Daviess sent Clay a challenge, which Clay promptly accepted. The hostile parties had arrived on "the field of honor" when friends interfered and brought about an amicable settlement without bloodshed. A more serious affair was that with Humphrey Marshall, who denounced Clay's first efforts in favor of a protective tariff as the "claptrap of a demagogue." A fierce altercation ensued, challenges were exchanged, and the two men actually did meet on the field of battle and both combatants were slightly wounded before the seconds could interfere to prevent further mischief. But the most famous of Clay's altercations was that which grew out of one of his wordy encounters with Andrew Jackson. One Kremer had printed in a Washington paper a scandalous charge known as the "corrupt bargain," in which Clay was alleged to have consented to throw his influence for John Quincy Adams, candidate for President, for a consideration. Clay published a card in which he pronounced the author of the story, "whoever he may be, a base and infamous calumniator, a dastard, a liar, and if he dare unveil himself and avow his name I will hold him responsible, as I here admit myself to be, to all the laws which govern and regulate men of

honor." No duel came out of this. Kremer was a ridiculous person, of whom Daniel Webster, writing to his brother Ezekiel, in New Hampshire, said: "Mr. Kremer is a man with whom one would think of having a shot about as soon as with your neighbor, Mr. Simeon Atkinson, whom he somewhat resembles." And Clay, eventually having been very much ashamed of threatening to challenge poor Kremer, subsequently expressed his regret therefor in these words: "I owe it to the community to say that whatever I may have done, or by inevitable circumstances might be forced to do, no man in it holds in deeper abhorrence than I do that pernicious practice (of duelling). Condemned as it must be by the judgment and the philosophy, to say nothing of the religion, of every thinking man, it is an affair of feeling about which we cannot, although we should, reason." Nevertheless Clay actually did later than this meet on the field of battle John Randolph, of Roanoke. During the celebrated debate on the Panama Congress, in Adams's administration, Randolph, with his usual boldness of vituperation, characterized the administration, which included Adams and Clay, as the "coalition of Blifil and Black George—the combination unheard of until now of the Puritan with the blackleg." That Clay should fairly boil over with wrath when he heard this is not to be wondered at. He challenged Randolph, and the two men met, exchanged shots, and both missed. Randolph, it is said, was dressed in a loose flowing coat, and no

one could say where in its voluminous folds Randolph's spare and attenuated body was disposed. A bullet touched the coat. At the second fire Clay's bullet inflicted a wound in the garment, whereupon Randolph fired his pistol into the air and said, "I do not fire at you, Mr. Clay," and then they shook hands and were again friends. It should be remembered that all these things happened in the early part of the present century when "the code" ruled throughout the Southern and Western States and a hostile encounter on the "field of honor" was a much less notable or even ridiculous affair than it would be in these later and more peaceful days.

As I have just intimated, when the storms of slander whirled upon the head of this gallant "Harry of the West," the charge of gaming was one of the most effective weapons in the hands of those who endeavored to beat down the popularity of the gallant Kentuckian in the Northern States. I remember to have seen, when a lad, a coarse wood-cut with which the New England States were flooded during the campaign of 1844, when Clay and Frelinghuysen were national candidates against Polk and Dallas. Clay's alleged vices were held up to public execration in sharp contrast with the virtues of Mr. Frelinghuysen, who was an upright Christian gentleman. The cartoon represented Mr. Clay seated at a gambling-table surrounded by the implements of the trade, with bottles, decanters, and pistols in thick array about him. On the other side of a narrow partition was a picture

of Mr. Frelinghuysen in gown and bands preaching to the heathen. There were indeed no limits to the vulgarity, brutality, and libellousness of the charges that were heaped upon Mr. Clay's name.

As of duelling, so of card-playing, it was then common throughout the country, and gaming for high stakes was not regarded with disfavor, especially in the Southern and Southwestern States. Clay was addicted to pleasure and social amusements. After he had passed the severe apprenticeship of his studious boyhood, he seems to have emancipated himself and thrown himself into the enjoyments of life with a certain fierce fervor which follows a reaction from a hard and barren life. William Plumer, of New Hampshire, who was a member of the Senate when Clay first took his seat in that body in 1806, thus set down in his diary a very fair estimate of the young Kentuckian's character: "Henry Clay is a man of pleasure, fond of amusements; he is a great favorite with the ladies; he is in all parties of pleasure, out almost every evening; reads but little—indeed, he said he meant this session should be a tour of pleasure. He is a man of talents, is eloquent, but not nice or accurate in his distinctions. He declaims more than he reasons. He is a gentlemanly and pleasant companion, a man of honor and integrity." As this tribute comes from a political opponent, we may be sure that it does not err on the side of liberality.

In the diary of John Quincy Adams, written

when he, Clay, Albert Gallatin, and others were Commissioners of the United States at Ghent, occur these words: "I dined again at the *table d'hôte* at one. The other gentlemen dined together at four. They sit after dinner and drink bad wine and smoke cigars, which neither suits my habits nor my health, and absorbs time which I can ill spare. I find it impossible, even with the most rigid economy of time, to do half the writing that I ought." Adams was ten years older than Clay and was brought up in the ascetic and thin atmosphere of Boston; and, with similarly implied censure on another day, he makes this entry: "Just before rising I heard Mr. Clay's company retiring from his chamber. I had left him with Mr. Russell, Mr. Bentzon, and Mr. Todd at cards. They parted as I was about to rise." On this, one of Henry Clay's biographers, Mr. Schurz, quietly remarks: "John Quincy Adams played cards too, but it was that solemn whist which he sometimes went through with the conscientious sense of performing a diplomatic duty." In another chapter of Mr. Adams's diary, Mr. Middleton, of South Carolina, is introduced as telling the story that Clay neglected to oppose a certain bill because "the last fortnight of the session Clay spent almost every night at the card-table, and one night Poindexter had won from him eight thousand dollars. This discomposed him to such a degree that he paid no attention to the business of the House the remainder of the session. Before it closed, however, he had won back from

Poindexter all that he had lost except about nine hundred dollars." One who knew Clay very well, Nathan Sargent, long time Commissioner of Customs, Washington, says: "When a candidate for the Presidency Mr. Clay was denounced as a gambler. He was no more a gambler than was almost every Southern and Southwestern gentleman of that day. Play was a passion with them; it was a social enjoyment; they loved its excitement and they played whenever and wherever they met, not for the purpose of winning money from one another, which is the gambler's motive, but for the pleasure it gave them." I quote from Mr. Colton, who, in speaking on this point says: "Mr. Clay never visited a gambling-house in his life, and was never seen at a gaming-table set up for that purpose. In the early periods of his public career he played with his equals in society for the excitements of the game, but he never allowed a pack of cards to be in his own house, and no man ever saw one there. That he was once in the habit of yielding to the seductive passion is not more true than that he always condemned the practice and for the most part abstained from it." If I have given much space to this often-repeated charge that Henry Clay was a gambler, it may be pleaded that to one who remembers the storm of obloquy which was hurled over Clay, and all who supported him, something should be permitted by way of explanation of the cause of that now historic commotion.

Clay's first appearance in Congress must have been significant to the elderly men who held their seats in the dignified United States Senate. It does not appear to have been noticed that this accomplished, self-poised, and confident young Kentuckian was not yet of legal age as a Senator. As he was born April 12, 1777, and entered the Senate December 29, 1806, he still lacked just three months and fourteen days of the age of thirty years, which the Constitution of the United States prescribes as a legal condition of eligibility to the Senate. His first beginnings in his career as a legislator were characteristic. It has always been the tradition of the Senate that a new member should hold his tongue for a year, except when answering to a roll-call or making some unimportant motion. Clay immediately plunged into the debates, as a matter of course. On the fourth day after he took his seat he offered resolutions concerning the circuit courts of the United States, and followed this up with sundry important public measures, one of which was an amendment to the Constitution concerning the judicial power of the United States. With utmost freedom he took part in all the debates and astonished the Senators with pungent sarcasms on men much older than himself. His first speech was in advocacy of a bill to bridge the Potomac River at Washington. Other bills were in the same line of that policy of "internal improvements" which was so ardently sustained by Clay throughout his whole Congressional career.

The young republic, still weak and exhausted from its long struggle for independence, was being harassed by all the first-rate European powers and occasionally nagged by some of the smaller ones. The British Government was particularly offensive in its insistence on the right of search, and American grievances in this direction so multiplied that within a very brief time over nine hundred ships were seized by the British and five hundred and fifty by the French. American citizens were impressed as British seamen, and the insolence with which our remonstrances were treated exasperated the young Republican leaders, of whom Henry Clay was now the most dashing and brilliant. Madison, who was President, was a timid and vacillating old man. Henry Clay, now Speaker of the House, so arranged the important committees of that body as to put them under control of the party anxious and importunate for war with Great Britain. It is not too much to say that he fanned the flames of rising indignation and was ready to proceed to any length to commit the United States to warlike purposes. He took the floor of the House to make speeches in favor of placing at the disposition of the President a large army. He spoke of war as a certain event, and pointed out that the "real cause of British aggression was not to distress an enemy, but to destroy a rival." When the question was asked, "What are we to gain by war?" he replied with ringing emphasis: "What are we not to lose by peace? — commerce, character, a nation's best

treasure, honor." His voice sounded like a clarion call throughout the republic. Indignation meetings were held, resolutions adopted calling on Congress to take action, and denouncing Great Britain as an insolent tyrant whose pride must be lowered. Clay proposed an invasion of Canada, another siege of Quebec, and an ultimate peace dictated at Halifax.

Clay's patriotism, always undoubted and passionate, was now at fever heat. With his magnificently dramatic air, he cried: "It is impossible that this country should ever abandon the gallant tars who have won for us such splendid trophies. Let me suppose that the genius of Columbia should visit one of them in his oppressor's prison and attempt to reconcile him to his forlorn and wretched condition. Should we say to him in the language of the gentlemen on the other side, 'Great Britain intends you no harm; she did not mean to impress you, but one of her own subjects having taken you by mistake, I will remonstrate and try to prevail upon her by peaceful means to release you, but I cannot, my son, fight for you.' If he did not consider this mockery, the poor tar would address her judgment and say: 'You owe me, my country, protection; I owe you in return obedience. I am not a British subject; I am a native of Massachusetts, where live my aged father, my wife, my children. I have faithfully discharged my duty. Will you refuse to do yours?'" The speech was concluded with these burning words: "No matter what his vocation, whether he seeks

subsistence amid the dangers of the sea or draws it from the bowels of the earth, or from the humblest occupations of mechanic life, wherever the sacred rights of an American freeman are assailed, all hearts ought to unite and every arm be braced to vindicate his course. . . . But if we fail, let us fail like men; lash ourselves to our gallant tars and expire together in one long struggle, fighting for free trade and seamen's rights." There was no withstanding this appeal. The increase of the army was voted by Congress and the war spirit rose with rekindled ardor.

It is unnecessary to trace the history of the War of 1812. After a succession of most brilliant naval victories which shed great luster upon the American name, the cause of the republic began to falter and men talked of peace. The diplomatic mission undertaken in the summer of 1814 by Adams, Clay, Bayard, Russell, and Gallatin was to treat with the British Government through its agents at Ghent. After a long and wordy engagement between the commissioners of Great Britain and the United States, the terms of peace were finally agreed upon. Clay throughout these negotiations showed a certain intuitive knowledge of events that were occurring behind the scenes and which were utterly unknown to the world outside until long afterward. As a fervid and high-spirited patriot, he was greatly disappointed by the outcome of the negotiations, and refused to go to London, where he expected to be still fur-

ther humiliated. But when the news of the battle of New Orleans (which was fought after peace had been concluded) reached Europe, his crest arose once more with pride, and he said, "Now I can go to England without mortification." It is a curious incident in Clay's career that he should have been the most active inciter of the War of 1812 and yet be compelled, as he thought, to "eat humble pie" in order to conclude peace at Ghent, the terms of which he thought were to be dictated at Halifax. On the whole, however, he was satisfied, and a year later, in a debate in the House of Representatives, he acknowledged large responsibility for the declaration of war, alluded to the fact that the republic had been insulted and outraged by Great Britain, France, Spain, Denmark, Naples, and even by the little contemptible power of Algiers, and in answer to the question, "What have we gained by war?" he said: "Let any man look at the degraded condition of his country before the war, the scorn of the universe, the contempt of ourselves, and tell me if we have gained nothing by the war. What is our situation now? Responsibility and character abroad, security and confidence at home."

It was in January, 1816, that Clay became involved in the long contest which grew out of the national bank project. He was liable to a charge of inconsistency, as he had once opposed the rechartering of the Bank of the United States, but was now in favor of that institution. His critics have said that, according to Clay's ar-

guments, the bank was unconstitutional in 1811, but was constitutional in 1816, owing to a change of circumstances. The conflict was long and exceedingly acrimonious. Before it terminated, Clay was involved in a bitter contest with Andrew Jackson and with his successor to the Presidency, Martin Van Buren. With characteristic self-possession, Clay proposed a radical change in the payment of members of Congress. Their compensation was $6 a day for each day's services. He introduced a bill to change it to $1,500 a year, the law to apply to the Congress then in session, which of course would involve back pay to members then in commission. This proposition provoked a storm of criticism, and Clay for a time suffered a temporary eclipse of his popularity. He was forced to take the stump in Kentucky and advocate, as was the custom of the times, his own re-election. In the canvass of that year (1816) Clay met in his district an old and once ardent political friend, a Kentucky hunter, who expressed his dissatisfaction with Clay's vote on the compensation bill.

"Have you a good rifle, my friend?" asked Mr. Clay.

"Yes."

"Did it ever flash?"

"It did once."

"And did you throw it away?"

"No; I picked the flint, tried it again and it was true."

"Have I ever flashed except this once you complain of?"

"No."

"And will you throw me away?"

"No, no," said the hunter with much emotion, grasping Clay's hand, "never; I will pick the flint and try it again."

Returned to Congress and again chosen Speaker, Clay speedily found himself in an embarrassing position. He had been a candidate for the Presidential election in the preceding November. It turned out that Jackson had ninety-nine electoral votes, Adams eighty-four, Crawford forty-one, and Clay thirty-seven. No one having received a clear majority of all the votes cast, the election was thrown into the House of Representatives, of which Clay was Speaker. This was Clay's first great disappointment. He had hoped to be one of the three higher candidates on the list, which would have made him eligible to receive the vote of the House in the canvass now about to open. Being the fourth in the list, he was ruled out; and now he was regarded as the President-maker. His impulsive temperament naturally felt the keenness of this great disappointment; and he did not sustain his defeat with much composure or fortitude. The friends of each of the three leading candidates courted and flattered Clay, who was supposed to hold the balance of power. His predilections were early in favor of John Quincy Adams. It is now a matter of record, although then unknown, that he had expressed his intention to throw his influence for Adams long before any advances were made to him by Jackson's friends. This, how-

ever, was not revealed to the friends of the other candidates. As soon as Clay's intentions became manifest, Jackson's friends charged upon Clay that he was a party to a corrupt bargain. This was the foundation of the celebrated "Bargain and Corruption" scandal which agitated the country for months and years thereafter. The assertion of the Jackson men was that Clay had agreed to support the candidacy of Adams on condition that he, Clay, should be made Secretary of State in the event of Adams's election. In those days the Secretary of State was usually regarded as the legitimate successor of the President, in whose Cabinet he was first minister. Adams was elected and Clay became his Secretary of State, but in that place he was exceedingly uncomfortable, and although his motives in accepting the portfolio of the State Department were absolutely pure, his temperament did not fit him for the routine duties of the office and he pined for the turbulence and excitement of the House of Representatives, in which he had achieved his greatest triumphs as a statesman and politician. Returning speedily to the House, he threw himself with great enthusiasm and spirit into the discussion of burning questions then animating Congress. Of the more important matters that engaged his attention then and previously we should recall his defence of the Spanish-American republics, his so-called American system of a protective tariff, internal improvements (to which he was sincerely and uncompromisingly devoted), and finally, slavery

and the compromise measures growing out of agitation of the slavery question during his long service in Congress. He was identified with many measures intended to compromise with the extreme and radical views of statesmen of both parties. Indeed, in his later years his best efforts were always directed to the adjustment of differences which seemed wellnigh impossible of settlement. He was the father of the Missouri Compromise, by which the extension of slavery north of the northern parallel of 36° 30′ was prohibited, and also of the compromise of 1850, the support of which was so fatal to the political fortunes of more than one Northern statesman. This disposition to compromise gave him the title of "The Great Pacificator."

Through all this strenuous and exciting epoch in his public life, Clay never forgot the distressed and the oppressed of other lands. His sympathies went out not only to the Spanish-American republics, but to Greece in her struggle for independence, to Hungary, and even to the enslaved Africans of our own country. He was well called "a Southern man with Northern principles." When reproached in a Northern State with being a slaveholder, he instantly offered to free his slaves if those who reproached him would undertake their maintenance, and through all his life he was a consistent although possibly mistaken supporter of the project of colonizing free and emancipated colored persons in Africa. Up to the date of his death he was an ardent supporter of the

American Colonization Society, and perpetually referred to it and its machinery as the most hopeful means for redeeming our country from the curse of slavery.

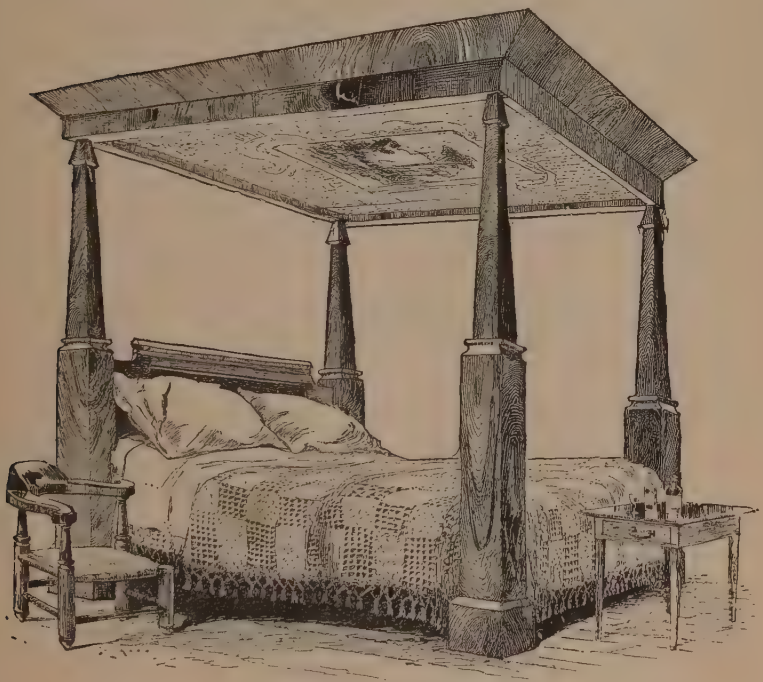
The great disappointment of his life was his defeat in the Presidential election of 1844. There was reason to suppose that he would have carried the State of New York by a small majority, which would have given him the election, but the Liberty party, representing the abolition sentiment of the State, had now become sufficiently strong to assert itself and to divide the vote so that the State cast a majority of five thousand and eighty votes for James K. Polk. Clay was deeply mortified at his defeat and complained that his friends had cruelly deceived him. His prestige suffered, and his personal feelings were painfully wounded. There was no recovery from an overthrow so overwhelming as this, and his later years were doubtless clouded by gloomy views of the sincerity of human affection, the fallacy of human hopes, and the gratitude of the republic. He had said on one occasion that he had "rather be right than be President." Doubtless, he felt that he was right, and still he failed to reach the Presidency. Later, and while he was still smarting under the sting of what he believed to be undeserved disgrace, he spoke at Lexington, Ky., in favor of gradual emancipation. Among his audience was Abraham Lincoln, who had journeyed thither from Springfield to hear the great Whig leader whom he loved so well.

Lincoln was greatly disappointed with the speech, which was written out and read and lacked the spontaneity and fire which Lincoln had anticipated. At the close of the meeting, Lincoln secured an introduction to the great man and was invited to Ashland. The disappointment of the speech was deepened by his intercourse with Clay. Long afterward he said of Clay that though he was polished in his manners, hospitable and kindly, he betrayed a certain consciousness of superiority and an almost offensive imperiousness. This deeply wounded the sensitive soul of Lincoln. He felt that Clay did not regard him or any other person as his equal. This lesson added to Lincoln's experience of human nature and was referred to by him in after life as a disappointment almost as wounding as the defeat of Henry Clay for the Presidency.

Clay's Tomb at Lexington, Ky.

The examples of Clay, Calhoun, and Webster are often cited as proving that America's greatest statesmen do not reach the Presidency. In the public career of Clay were four sharp and painful disappointments. As we have already seen, he was defeated in 1824, when Andrew Jackson was chosen by the House of Representatives. Again, in 1840, he hoped to be nominated by the

Whig National Convention, but was distanced by General William Henry Harrison. He was actually nominated, but defeated, in 1844, when Polk was elected. Finally, in 1848, he expected

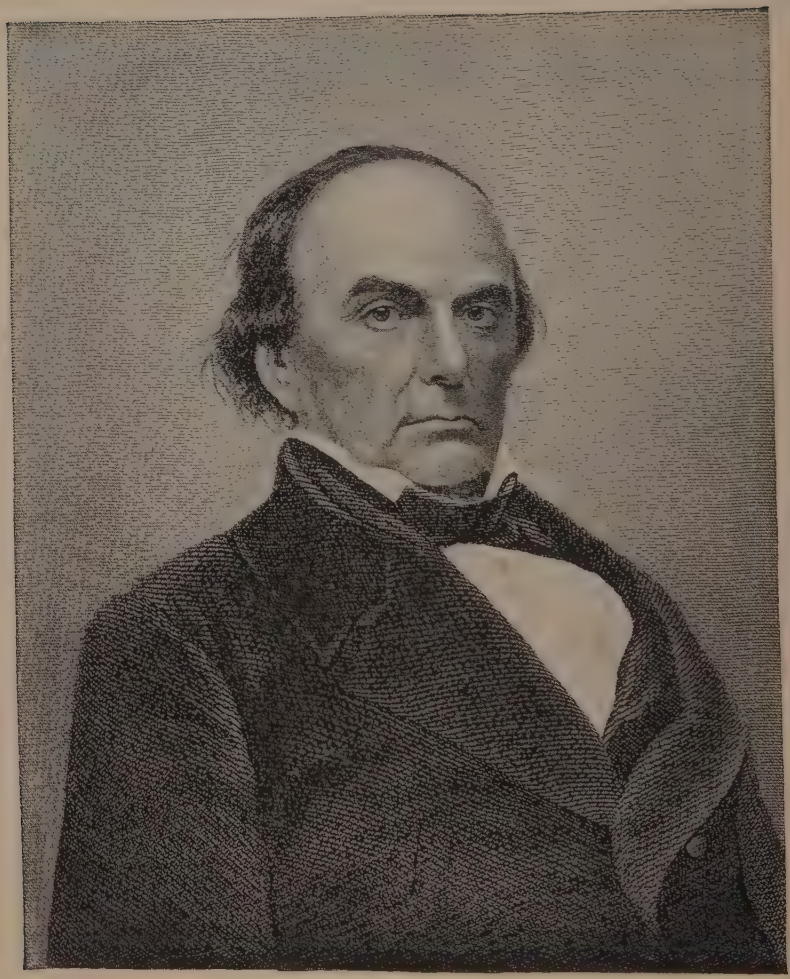


Henry Clay's Bed, used by him for fifty years.

to receive the nomination of his party convention at Baltimore, but was again disappointed, General Taylor, the hero of the Mexican war (a war to which Clay gave no countenance) being the nominee. At this point Clay's patience broke down and he refused to support the nomination

before the people, choosing rather to sulk in his tent.

Henry Clay died in Washington, June 29, 1852. in the seventy-sixth year of his age, preceding Webster to the grave only five months. With lamentation and mourning that filled all the land, the great leader was borne to his beloved Kentucky, where a magnificent monument reared by the hands of his admirers marks his last resting-place.



Daniel Webster.

## II.

## DANIEL WEBSTER.

THERE are three scenes in the life of Daniel Webster which may be regarded as marking three stages in his long and wonderful career:

1. His father's means were limited, and the narrow circumstances of the family seemed to restrict his boyish ambitions to the humblest walk of life; but his father, without saying a word to the boy, had resolved that Daniel should have a college education; and one day, riding in the farm wagon to the town where the lad was to be put under the tutorship of a competent teacher, the father briefly, almost grimly, communicated his intentions to the boy. Young Daniel, overcome by the unexpected good fortune opening before his eyes, laid his face upon his father's shoulder and burst into tears. The homely homespun country lad saw before him the possibilities of a high career.

2. In January, 1830, while he was a United States Senator from Massachusetts, it fell to his lot to defend his native New England from the attacks of a representative Southerner, General Hayne, of South Carolina, in the Senate. It was a momentous period in the history of the country. That reply was made at the zenith of Web-

ster's life. It is the place of all others where he grandly stood forth as a parliamentary orator, a master of eloquence. The world even now turns and looks upon that historic scene with awe and admiration. At this point doubtless culminated the fame and the intellectual power of Daniel Webster.

House where Webster was Born at Salisbury (now Franklin), N. H.

3. In May, 1852, Webster, now past his manly prime, crippled by an untoward accident, stood on the grand rostrum of Faneuil Hall, in Boston, an entrance to which had been previously denied him by the city authorities. He had not long since lost a part of his great popularity in consequence of his course upon the slavery question, and many of his former friends had fallen away from him. Whittier had writ-

ten of him that sad, bitter rebuke contained in the poem entitled "Ichabod." Five months later the great Webster was laid to rest by the sea he loved so well.

The condition of the country at the time of Webster's boyhood (he was born in 1782) was one of extreme poverty and bareness of the luxuries of life. In one of his later addresses he said: "It did not happen to me, gentlemen, to be born in a log cabin, but my elder brothers and sisters were born in a log cabin and raised amidst the snowdrifts of New Hampshire at a period so early that when the smoke first rose from its rude chimney and curled over the frozen hills there was no similar evidence of a white man's habitation between it and the settlements on the rivers of Canada." School facilities were few and far between, and sometimes it was necessary for the lad to follow the schoolmaster from hamlet to hamlet, boarding away from home, in order that he might secure the primitive education thus put within his reach. The hard and barren soil of New Hampshire did not yield rich returns to the farmers who struggled for a living in the region of the "frozen hills" of which he spoke. His school-days were days of privation, and yet he made great advances in acquiring knowledge, and was considered the quickest boy in school. His memory was astonishingly retentive, and he seemed to have considered that a book was not merely to be read, but to be committed to memory. He tells in his diary of his gaining the reward of a jackknife offered to

the boy who should be able to recite the greatest number of verses from the Bible. When his turn came he arose in his place and reeled off verses until the schoolmaster was fain to cry "Hold! enough!" A cotton handkerchief, on which was printed the Constitution of the United States in colored letters, gave him the means of reading and fixing in his mind forever the words of that famous instrument. He was reckoned in the sparsely settled neighborhood as a prodigy of learning, and his delicate frame, big eyes, and musical speech were famed throughout the region. Of that period of his life he says: "I read what I could get to read, went to school when I could, and when not at school was a farmer's youngest boy, not good for much for want of health and strength, but expected to do something." He tended the saw-mill and "did the chores" of the house and farm.

His brother Ezekiel and himself divided between them the humble labors of the home. Ezekiel, who was Daniel's best-beloved friend and brother, usually took the laboring oar. There is an anecdote of the father calling out to the boys who were playing in the barn, "What are you doing, Daniel?" His reply was, "Nothing." "And what are you doing, Ezekiel?" "Helping Daniel." And so through life it was Ezekiel who helped Daniel. On another occasion the two lads were allowed to go to a fair in a neighboring town, each furnished with a little pocket money. When they returned in the evening Daniel was overflowing with animal spirits

and enjoyment. Ezekiel was silent. The mother, inquiring as to their day's doings, finally asked Daniel what he had done with his money. "Spent it," was the reply. "And what did you do with yours, Ezekiel?" "Lent it to Daniel," said the elder brother. As one of his biog-

Webster when a Young Man.

raphers has said, "that answer sums up the story of Webster's home life in childhood. Everyone was giving or lending to Daniel of their money, of their time, their activity, their love and affection. This petting was partially due to Webster's health, but it was also in great measure

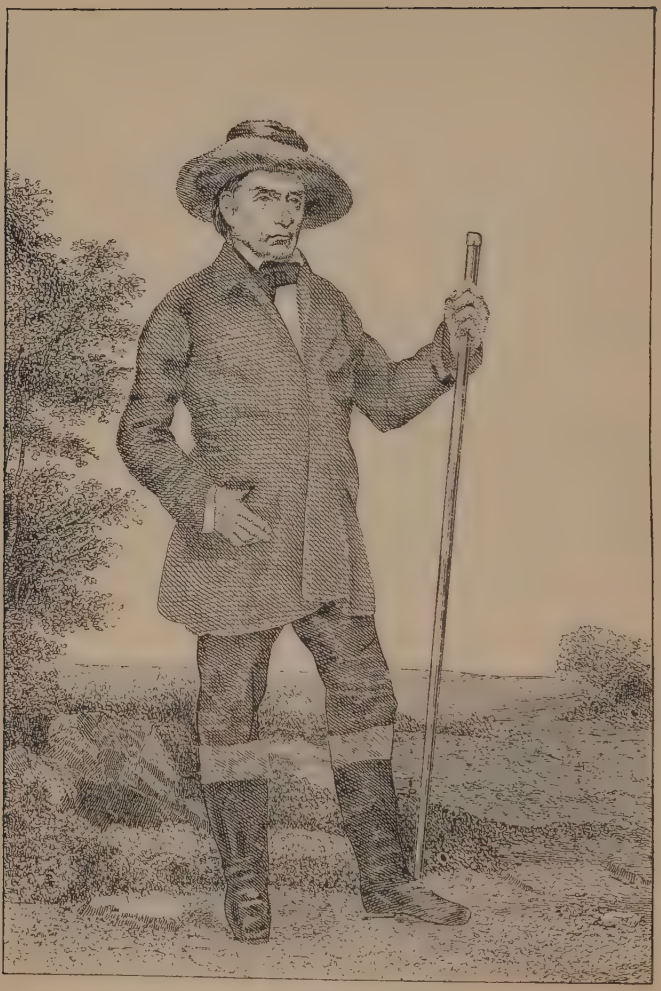
owing to his nature. He was one of those rare and fortunate beings who without exertion draw to themselves the devotion of other people and are always surrounded by men and women eager to do and suffer for them." In manhood he loved his friends with a love passing that of woman; his great passionate and affectionate nature knit to him with bands of steel his chosen friends, and up to the day of his death some of these devoted and worshipful ones ministered to his wants and his comfort and his luxury with unstinting hand.

In his biography of Webster, Mr. George T. Curtis, speaking of his own return to Boston for a few hours, while Webster's life was slowly ebbing away, says: "A gentleman rang at my door and called me out. As I met him he placed in my hand a thick roll of bank-notes, desiring me to convey it to Mr. Webster. When I asked him from whom it came, he mentioned the name of a venerable and wealthy citizen of Boston, who had learned that Mr. Webster was dying, and who had said that at such a time there ought to be no want of money in Mr. Webster's house." While we applaud the generosity of the giver, it is impossible to restrain a feeling of profound regret that anything should have made this charity even apparently needful.

In due course of time he went to Dartmouth College, where his rustic dress and manners provoked the ridicule of his new associates. He found it difficult, if not impossible, to take part in some of the exercises of the school, such as

declamation and so on, in which he was expected to engage; but he speedily developed a rare faculty for absorbing knowledge, and not only became proficient in Latin and Greek, but readily acquired ancient and modern history, and became familiar with the drift of public events in this country and in Europe. So great was his reputation in the college and its neighborhood as a speaker and writer, that the people of the town of Hanover invited him to deliver an oration on July 4, 1800. He was then eighteen years old. This was his first public performance which was printed. It is characterized by the high-flown language of the sophomore, and was doubtless received with every demonstration of admiration and applause. He denounced France, then unfriendly to the United States and under the domination of Bonaparte, whom the young orator styled "the gasconading pilgrim of Egypt." He was graduated in due course in August, 1801, without either special credit or special mention. The straitened circumstances of the family made it necessary that he should at once begin to support himself. While in college he had added to his slender income in every possible way, and he now accepted the post of school-teacher in the town of Fryeburg, Me., considering himself a lucky young fellow to have secured the job.

Ezekiel Webster, who appears to have been a man of extraordinary parts, manifested a disposition to follow in his younger brother's footsteps. After many anxious family councils, it



Webster in Fishing Costume.
(*From Peter Harvey's "Reminiscences and Anecdotes of Daniel Webster."*)

was decided that this step might be taken, the good mother of the house saying, in answer to the remonstrances of the father, "I will trust the boys." Daniel's life at Fryeburg was a hard one. The home farm was heavily mortgaged, and Ezekiel, who was now in college, was no longer the prop and stay as he had been of the house. Daniel manfully carried his share of the burdens, and out of school-hours copied deeds and other legal papers, an occupation which he detested, in order that he might give all his salary to his brother preparing for college.

Ezekiel Webster lived to attain eminence in the profession of the law. He was a man of high talent and much professional learning; he was in person and physique not unlike his brother, the "godlike Daniel." He died very suddenly in the court-room, at Concord, N. H., while addressing a jury. He was then only forty-nine years old, and had he lived would have doubtless reached great fame as a lawyer. Years later, when time had so assuaged his bitter grief that he could speak tranquilly of his brother's death, Daniel Webster said of him who was gone: "He appeared to me the finest human form that I ever laid eyes on. I saw him in his coffin—a tinged cheek, a complexion clear as the heavenly light."

Daniel Webster was a good teacher. His dignity, even temper, and firmness commanded the respect of his pupils, and wherever he went he produced an impression upon those whom he met. Those who could in later years recall his

young manhood in Fryeburg, invariably spoke of his imposing presence and his wonderful eyes. He was known in the village as "All-Eyes." He devoured with keen zest every book upon which he could lay his hands, and in a single winter exhausted the resources of the little circulating library of Fryeburg. His memory seems to have been like iron; an impression once made was ineradicable. On his death-bed he quoted a phrase, "The Jackdaw in the Steeple," from a poem of Cowper's, which none about him could recall, and the strangeness of which led some of them to suppose his mind was wandering.

It is impossible to think of Webster at any period of his life as other than the grand, imposing figure that looms up in history and in the memory of the few who survive him. His form in his manhood was tall, massive, and commanding; his face was rugged, and his overhanging brows were projected over deep and cavernous eyes in which gloomed and glowed a wonderful tropical light. There was, indeed, about his presence and in his habit of thought a certain Oriental flavor that seemed strangely foreign to New England and to the cold and inhospitable climate in which he was reared.

The costume in which he generally appeared on public occasions has become historic. He wore a dress-coat of blue cloth, with brass buttons; a buff waistcoat cut low and showing an expanse of white shirt-bosom, and on his nether limbs trousers of black cloth. On these occasions,

too, he wore low-cut shoes and white stockings, and about his neck was swathed a white lawn tie in many folds, as was the custom of the time, and over this was turned his high collar. In this garb his portrait has been painted many times, and this is the outward Webster that comes to the mental vision of every man who ever saw him in public. It is impossible to conceive of him as being at any time and under any circumstances a trivial or undignified person. He always was on dress-parade. He was always statuesque, and his was always a figure to compel respect. It was said of him that when a stranger he passed through the streets of Liverpool, England, casual wayfarers looked after him and said, "That must be a king;" and on one occasion when with a friend he had had sudden occasion to enter a New Haven bar-room, the keeper of the place, startled and astonished by the grandeur of Webster's appearance, said breathlessly, "That man ought to be President at the very least."

Yet the testimony of his intimates shows that his disposition was playful, and we know that he took great delight in the smallest details of house and home keeping. He had an immense fund of humor. He was fond of the pleasures of the table and chose his viands and his wines with anxious and appreciative care. While he was Secretary of State, and an important treaty—that which settled the Northeastern boundary question—was coming to a vote in the Senate, he paused in the midst of the burdens of State and wrote a letter to his farmer in New England, giving ex-

plicit directions about the care of certain salt hay, the building of a piggery, and other similar matters.

There are extant many letters giving charming glimpses of the man in undress, as we may say. One of these is addressed to John Taylor, who had charge of his farm in Franklin, N. H. It was written just after Webster's famous 7th of March speech, delivered in 1852, when the great Senator was overwhelmed with the bitterness of the political contest then raging, not only about him in Washington, but all over the country. Thus he begins: "John Taylor. Go ahead. The heart of the winter is broken and before the first day of April all your land may be plowed. Buy the oxen of Captain Marston if you think the price fair. Pay for the hay. I send you a check for $160 for these two objects. Put the great oxen in a condition to be turned out to be fattened. You have a good horse team and I think in addition to this four oxen and a pair of four-year-old steers will do your work."

After giving directions of this kind with great minuteness and admonishing Taylor that he wants "no pennyroyal crops," and that his mother's garden must be kept in the best order at any cost, he turns to politics, as if it were impossible to keep his thoughts out of the commotion going on about him, and says:

"There are some animals that live best in the fire, and there are some men who delight in heat, smoke, combustion and even general conflagration. They do not value the things which make

peace; they enjoy only controversy, contention, and strife. Have no communion with such persons either as neighbors or politicians. You have no more right to say that slavery ought not to exist in Virginia than a Virginian has to say that slavery ought to exist in New Hampshire. This is a question left to every State to decide for itself, and if we mean to keep the States together we must leave to every State this power of deciding for itself. . . . John Taylor, you are a free man; you possess good principles, you have a large family to rear and provide for by your labor. Be thankful for the government which does not oppress you, which does not bear you down by excessive taxation, but which holds out to you and to yours the hope of all the blessings which liberty, industry, and security may give. John Taylor, thank God morning and evening that you are born in such a country. John Taylor, never write me another word upon politics."

Webster, through all his life, was easily influenced by others, especially when those others had won his confidence and affection. His conduct in the matter of the lucrative court-clerkship offered him in 1804, when he most needed money, was a good example of this trait. His brother Ezekiel was then manfully fighting his way to college; Daniel was occasionally earning a little money in the law office of Mr. Christopher Gore, of Boston, when the judges of the Court of Common Pleas, in which his father practised in New Hampshire, offered Daniel the place of

clerk at a salary of $1,500 a year. To the young law student this was a princely income; it would be equal to five or ten thousand dollars in these days. That income would enable him to smooth Ezekiel's road to the hill of learning, lift the home mortgage and lighten the labors of his father's last years. He joyfully prepared to return to New Hampshire and enter upon his profitable and welcome duties. To his intense astonishment and disappointment, Mr. Gore coldly expressed his disapproval of the change. He pointed out the danger that he might be removed at any time by the favor of the judges, that the salary might be reduced, and that it led to nothing, and would block any great career that might open before him. Dazed and dumbfounded by this unexpected presentation of the case, Webster reluctantly admitted its justness, and, much to the amazement of his father, declined the post. It was well. Nevertheless, even the narrowing labors of that small office could not have long crippled or hedged in the genuis of Daniel Webster.

His first great legal argument was that in the celebrated Dartmouth College case which was argued in 1818 before the United States Supreme Court. As a lawyer, he had a certain divine instinct to seize upon the points of any case which was committed to him. On one occasion an important lawsuit was put in his hands by a firm of lawyers to argue before the United States Supreme Court. The briefs in the case were sent to him in Washington by the hand of a

junior member of the law firm, and when Webster looked the papers over he said: "And is this all?" The younger man said timidly: "There is another point which I have presented to the firm, but which they thought not material," and then he stated the case. Webster's eyes glowed and he said: "My dear sir, that is *the* point;" and on this he won the case. The Dartmouth College case was one in which the Legislature of the

Webster's Home at Marshfield, Mass.

State of New Hampshire had interfered with the interior government of the college and had attempted to change its course of direction. Webster's contention was that "the principle in our constitutional jurisprudence which regards a charter of a private corporation as a contract and places it under the protection of the Constitution of the United States debarred the Legislature from interfering." The decision in the case, which was made February, 1819, affirmed the ground taken by Webster and established a precedent in law which was of the highest importance.

It cannot be said that as a jury lawyer Webster always relied upon the law in the case. In a celebrated murder trial in which he appeared for the prosecution in Salem, Mass., in 1830, he was said to have fairly terrified the jury into conviction. Captain White, a retired and wealthy sea-captain of Salem, had been murdered in his bed. J. F. Knapp and others as accessories were accused of the crime. It was in this trial that he made a wonderful argument in which he described the circumstances of a murder, the inmost feelings of the slayer and his stealthy escape. In his address to the jury occurs the celebrated passage, when, speaking of the crime of murder, he said: "It betrays his discretion, it breaks down his courage, it conquers his prudence. When suspicions from without begin to embarrass him and the net of circumstance to entangle him the fatal secret struggles with still greater violence to burst forth. It must be confessed, it will be confessed; there is no refuge from confession but suicide, and suicide is confession."

So, in the Dartmouth College case, although that was not, as one might well suppose, a cause with which to move an audience profoundly, it is true of Webster that those who heard his closing sentences listened with faces wet with tears. Professor Chauncey Goodrich, of Yale College, who heard this remarkable speech and wrote an account of it, says that Webster closed with these words: "Sir, you may destroy this little institution; it is weak; it is in your hands. I know

it is one of the lesser lights in the literary horizon of our country. You may put it out. But if you do so, you must carry through your work. You must extinguish, one after another, all those greater lights of science which for more than a century have thrown their radiance over our land. It is, sir, as I have said, a small college. And yet there are those who love it." "Here," says Professor Goodrich, "the feelings he had thus far succeeded in keeping down broke forth. His lips quivered; his firm cheeks trembled with emotion; his eyes were filled with tears; his voice choked, and he seemed struggling to the utmost to gain that mastery over himself which might save him from an unmanly burst of feeling. . . . The whole seemed mingled throughout with the recollection of father, mother, brother, and all the privations and trials through which he had made his way into life. Everyone saw that it was wholly unpremeditated, a pressure on his heart, which sought relief in words and tears." It was then that the great loving heart of Webster spoke in most moving eloquence.

It was as an occasional orator that Webster achieved his greatest fame, possibly with the single exception of his celebrated reply to Hayne. The oration at Plymouth, Mass., delivered on the two hundreth anniversary of its settlement, December 22, 1820, was perhaps the first of his greatest oratorical discourses. The first Bunker Hill oration, delivered in June, 1825, was a work of the greatest splendor. Mag-

nificent in conception, luminous with the grandest imagery, flowing like the full volume of a river, it at once commanded the attention of the entire nation. It was spoken, it would appear, not so much to the few thousands that clustered around the foundations of Bunker Hill monument as to the republic, to posterity. This was one of the first, if not the first, of the great orations of Webster that took their place in the literature of the country and were embodied in the text-books of the schools for the inspiration of the youth of the republic. The passage beginning "Venerable men, you have come down to us from a former generation," it is said, so thrilled the audience that one could see the play of light and shade as it swept over the sea of upturned faces before the speaker. The impression which this speech made upon those who heard it was probably more vivid than that left by any other of his later occasional orations.

Another splendid display of his eloquence was the eulogy on Adams and Jefferson, delivered in Faneuil Hall, Boston, 1826. Of that speech, the passage which purports to be a speech delivered by John Adams when the signing of the Declaration of Independence was under discussion, it is explained that Webster deliberately invented the whole. Many school-boys have declaimed the immortal words beginning "Sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish," under the impression that these were the real words of John Adams; but Webster never pretended that they were. In a letter to an inquiring

friend, written in 1846, Webster said: "The Congress of the Revolution sat with closed doors; its proceedings were made known to the public from time to time by printing its journal, but the debates were not published. So far as I know, there is not existing in print or manuscript the speech or any part or fragment of the speech delivered by Mr. Adams on the question of the Declaration of Independence." Webster goes on to say: "The speech was written by me in my house in Boston the day before the delivery of the discourse in Faneuil Hall. A poor substitute I am sure it would appear to be if we could now see the speech actually made by Mr. Adams on that transcendently important occasion."

It has been said by some of the indiscreet and intemperate admirers of Webster's genius that many if not all of his greatest orations were composed upon the spur of the moment and that his greatest efforts were purely extemporaneous and suggested by the circumstances immediately about him. I have somewhere seen an anecdote to this effect: His oration on Alexander Hamilton was delivered at a public dinner in New York, and when he approached that passage in which he used the memorable words applied to Hamilton, "He smote the rock of the national resources and abundant streams of revenue gushed forth," etc., in making a gesture, the orator broke a drinking-glass and cut his finger, and as he slowly wrapped a napkin about the bleeding wound, the figure of the gushing stream

was suggested by the incident. This is clearly a misconception, as Webster had in his mind the figure of Moses smiting the rock in the wilderness. And we have the assurance of those who knew him best, Mr. George T. Curtis and Mr. Peter Harvey, that all his great forensic and oratorical efforts were the result of careful preparation. Webster himself said of his reply to Hayne, that as a matter of fact that speech had been lying in his mind and in the pigeon-holes of his desk for more than a year. It was prepared for another occasion, but was not delivered; and Webster declared that if Mr. Hayne had intended to make a speech to fit that which Webster had already, he could not have come nearer to it than he did. Once when asked if certain of his speeches were delivered at brief notice, he opened his great eyes with an expression of astonishment and said: "Young man, there is no such thing as extemporaneous acquisition." Webster spoke extemporaneously constantly while he was in the Senate, and he intended to convey by this remark that knowledge could not be acquired without study, and that study was necessary to acquire the knowledge which informed all of his speeches.

It has been said, too, that in oratory Webster was a sculptor rather than a painter. This seems a too subtile definition. Certainly many of his orations glow with light and color, and his powers of description were often simply pictorial. In his reply to Hayne he pictures the patriots of Massachusetts and South Carolina marching shoulder to shoulder as they went through the Revolution, or standing hand in hand around the administration of Washington, and in the wonderful peroration of that great address, as he raised his eyes to the glass skylight of the Senate chamber and saw the colors of the Republic waving from the flagstaff, he exclaimed: "Let their last feeble and lingering glance rather behold the gorgeous ensign of the republic, now known and honored throughout the earth, still full-high advanced, its arms and trophies streaming in their original lustre, not a stripe erased or polluted, nor a single star obscured." This was full of color.

Webster loved color and bigness and vastness. Among all his creatures on his farm none were so dear to him as his great oxen, and in his last days he had these slow-moving animals driven up to his window where he could look at them, hear their breathings and gaze into their great eyes as he reclined within. The illimitable sea with its mysterious vagueness, Niagara with its terrific downpour and its resounding roar, and the great peaks of the White Mountains, all moved him profoundly. The cathedrals of Europe and the enormous bulks of

masonry that he saw in England seemed to have impressed him more than anything else he beheld. These appealed to his sense of grandeur; their mere greatness may be said to be akin to the somewhat grandiose quality of his own disposition. He was always monumental; even his familiar talk was pervaded with a certain unexpectedness of illustration that was most original.

On one occasion when the Senate had had an all-night session and the Senators were dozing in their chairs, one who sat near Webster, aroused by the noise of the janitor opening the shutters in the upper part of the great room, said: "What is that—are they letting in the day-light?" "They are letting out the darkness," was Webster's reply in his deepest, grummest, bass voice, as he nodded in his chair.

As to his public life it is only necessary to recall these dates: He was first chosen a representative to the lower house of Congress from the Portsmouth, N. H., district, and took his seat in May, 1813, while the young republic was still engaged in the war with Great Britain. Two years later he was re-elected, and at the end of this his second term he retired from public office and moved to Boston, where he sought and obtained an enlargement of his already lucrative law practice. It was said that at this time he had the amplest income of any lawyer in the United States—$20,000—which was a great sum for those days, being named as the average of his earnings. In 1822 he was again elected to Congress as a representative from the Boston

district. He continued in the House of Representatives until 1827, when he was chosen United States Senator from Massachusetts for the term of six years. He was re-elected in 1833 and in 1839, but retired from the Senate in 1841 to accept the office of Secretary of State under President Harrison. When John Tyler succeeded to the Presidency, after the death of General Harrison, Mr. Webster was the only member of the Harrison Cabinet to remain in office, and in 1842 he concluded the famous Ashburton treaty, which defined the Northeastern boundary between the United States and Canada. He retired from the State Department shortly after and remained in private life until 1845, when again he was returned to the Senate by the State of Massachusetts and remained a member of that body during the Mexican war and the administration of President Taylor. When Taylor was succeeded by Fillmore, on the death of the former, in 1850, Mr. Webster again entered the Cabinet as Secretary of State and held that office up to the day of his death.

It is probable that Webster's ambition to reach the Presidency was kindled during the exciting period that followed his great speech in reply to Hayne, when he was offered much applause. This was in 1830. Ten years later he was a formidable competitor for the Whig nomination which was carried off by General Harrison. Again, in 1844, he seemed to come near realizing his hopes, but was defeated by Henry Clay. Once more, in 1848, he contested the nomination

at Baltimore and was confessedly and bitterly disappointed by the nomination of General Scott. In all these cases Webster's chagrin and disappointment were doubtless very great, but it was not until repeated failures had somewhat soured his naturally sweet and genial disposition that he made open demonstration of his disgust. He did not hesitate to say that one of these nominations was not fit to be made, and that another successful candidate was merely the representative of "availability." As Secretary of State his name will always be identified with several events of great importance in the history of the republic. His settlement of the Northeastern boundary question, his attitude toward General Jackson in the great United States bank war, his letter to Mr. Hulseman, the Austrian ambassador, concerning the Hungarian rebellion, his management of the case of the steamer Caroline, and other matters growing out of our ticklish relations with Canada, are among the points which stand out prominently in his career as a minister of state.

In debate Webster was not only dignified, but urbane and kindly disposed and chivalrous toward those engaged against him. He never descended to personalities, never took unfair advantage of an adversary, and never resorted to any tricks of sophistry to confuse an opponent. In one of his letters from England, speaking of his visit to the British Parliament, he said: "I have liked some of the speeches very well; they generally show excellent temper, po-

liteness, and mutual respect among the speakers.

When, shortly after his famous 7th of March speech, 1850, he returned to Massachusetts, his friends went through the form of asking the Board of Aldermen for the use of Faneuil Hall. To their infinite consternation and wrath that favor was denied. The persons composing a majority of the Board of Aldermen belonged to a peculiar political combination known as the Coalitionists. Webster's 7th of March speech was by them believed to be a bid for Southern support in his coming campaign for the Presidential nomination. It is true that for the first time in his life he appeared to have forsaken his principles and was now disposed to temporize with the slave power. He had lost favor in New England, and throughout the North his speech on the compromise measures of that year had been received with mingled incredulity and scorn. But no words can express the indignation of the stanch Whigs of Boston, who worshipped Webster as an idol, when it was suddenly made known that the doors of Faneuil Hall were closed against this demi-god. He spoke, however, to a great throng that gathered about the hotel where he was stopping, and unconsciously added fuel to the flames by making use of one or two unfortunate phrases, which were picked up and commented upon by a hostile press. One of these was that Massachusetts men must "conquer their prejudices" and support the Fugitive Slave law, a

measure then regarded by the people whom he addressed with the bitterest execration. The use of Faneuil Hall was subsequently tendered to him by the city government in the most obsequious manner; but his engagements made it impossible for him to speak at that time, and his last appearance there was one year later. In the meantime he had not publicly spoken in Boston, and the belief that he would take occasion now to refer to last year's denial of the privileges of the hall drew together a great crowd. It was past two o'clock in the afternoon when Webster, broken with the cares of state, harassed by infinite disappointment, oppressed by the sense of declining power and popularity, and hampered by a lameness resulting from a recent accident, rose to speak; but instead of addressing himself to any discussion of the event which was uppermost in men's minds—his previous exclusion from Faneuil Hall—he contented himself by saying: "This is Faneuil Hall—*open*," and passed on to the consideration of the state of the country and to other matters very remote from those which oppressed the mind of the people. A practical New Englander, standing in the crowd, said "that word 'open' weighed about five tons." When he spoke in front of his hotel, he said: "Break up the Whig party! And what will become of Me?" Those who heard this portentous question, for a moment seemed to think that a tremendous disaster hung over the nation as he thus spoke. The end of the world seemed to be nigh.

Although Webster has long since been dead,

controversy over his attitude on several important political questions of his day still is liable to start up at any time. Was his course on the tariff statesmanlike? Did he sacrifice principle for personal expediency when the slavery compromises of 1850 came up for discussion? It has been argued in his behalf that as New England was not in favor of a protective tariff in 1826, and was in favor of it a few years later, Webster was entirely justified in changing sides as his constituents changed. This was not exactly harmonious with his contention that he was an independent Senator—independent of his constituents to a certain degree. It remains true that he changed sides on the tariff question within the space of two years.

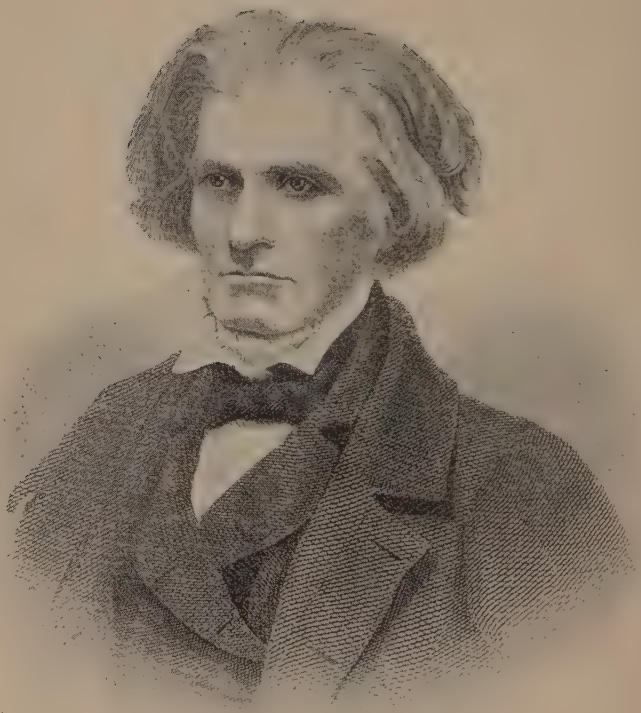
On the slavery question his attitude was still less satisfactory. It is impossible to resist the impression that Webster's inclination to temporize was due to his unconquerable desire for a Presidential nomination. No living man had denounced the institution of American slavery in words more bitter and burning than his. He had studiously refrained from any appearance of meddling with slavery in the States in which it already existed. But he had urged that its extension must not be thought of. Yet, when the compromise measures of 1850 were up, he was willing to support the Fugitive Slave law and to leave the question of slavery in the new Territories to the laws of nature. This was the fundamental of the 7th of March speech—a speech which revolted New England against him.

There is one phase of Webster's character which cannot be evaded in any biographical sketch or discussion of his career. His income, as I have said, was at times very great; it might have been greater; but in any event, whatever his earnings may have been, it is clear that he was incapable of husbanding his resources and of keeping out of debt. After he went to Boston he was always in debt. His friends, who were many and devoted, were constantly called upon to supply the deficiences of his bank account. Even in his youth he was indifferent to debt, and in his later years this indifference increased beyond all reason. He not only never saved, but he lived beyond his means. He loved handsome things, a fine library, great herds of cattle, a noble estate, and an ample domain. He was accused by his enemies of selling his influence for gain. Doubtless these accusations were unfounded, but his reputation for thriftlessness and debt-incurring probably gave ground for suspicion with many who would have liked to think well of him. Even in his last days, when he was ill and should have been taking his ease, he accepted a large fee in the celebrated Goodyear india-rubber litigation because he was in debt. "This fee," he said, "I must have, for it will pay fifteen thousand dollars of my debts, and that is what I am striving to do; it is what, if my life is spared, I mean to do. If I can pay my debts I shall die in peace, a happy man." But he died insolvent. The trusts which he made in his will of property and money, which for him

had no real existence, were undertaken by his friends who, when he lay in his tomb at Marshfield, discharged obligations and prosperously administered his estate. A day or two before he died he said: "I should like to provide something for my family and not leave them to the cold charity of the world, but Providence guides and overrules; I cannot help it and therefore I submit to it." There is something profoundly pathetic in these words of the great man. It was lamentable that he should have been so left that his last days should have been embittered by thoughts of poverty. He was incapable of saving, large though his means were; but it should be added that his bounty was as broad and generous as his personal desires. He was a spendthrift, and he gave as ungrudgingly to others as to the gratification of his own appetites and passions.

It has been said of him that he was a magnificent animal. On this phase of his character we need not look. It is enough to know that he was a transcendent genius, a great power in the land, a defender of the nationality of the States, an unerring expounder of the Federal Constitution, and unalterably devoted to the perpetuity and integrity of the Union. In his last hours we see him lying in the darkness and seclusion of his house by the sea at Marshfield, his large, sad eyes turning to look through the silent watches of the night upon the light that showed the flag of his country waving from the masthead of a little shallop moored by the shore.

True to his dignified habits of thought and oratorical expression, even in those last hours he gathered his family and friends about him and discoursed of his relations to his God, of his love and affection to his family, and of the immortality of the soul. After a moment of silence, he roused himself and looking eagerly around asked: "Have I—wife, son, doctor, friends, are you all here?—have I on this occasion said anything unworthy of Daniel Webster?" Dramatic and dignified to the last, he said but little more. Past midnight, when it was supposed he would never speak again, he roused himself with the memorable words, "I still live." From this he sank by slow degrees, and when the bright autumnal Sunday morning of October 24, 1852, dawned goldenly upon the shore, the bells of Marshfield told to listening ears that a great man was dead.



John C. Calhoun.

## III.

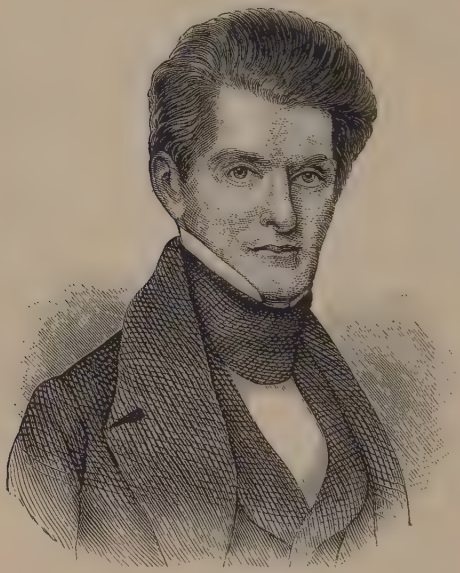
## JOHN C. CALHOUN.

THERE were three bright particular stars shining in the political sky of the American republic during the first half of the nineteenth century. Each burned with a lustre of his own. Calhoun, Clay, and Webster formed this constellation. The genius of John C. Calhoun shone with the cold, clear frosty starlight of a Northern atmosphere. Although Calhoun was a Southron born and bred, there was nothing tropical in his temperament or his character. His logic was pitiless and cold, his reasoning implacable, his intellect calm.

There is something melancholy, too, about his career. He left very little material for a personal biography, and not much is known concerning his individuality and private life. The fire of his genius burned itself out in a hopeless defence of the darling institution of slavery, and he died just as the fabric which he had so painfully reared was beginning to topple to its fall.

It is needless at this late day to make any argument to prove the intellectual greatness of Calhoun. His place in the great triumvirate has been fixed by the muse of history and by the

concurrent opinion of more than one generation. No breath of slander ever stained his name, and though he had ambitious dreams of his arriving at the highest office in the gift of the American people, his course was singularly free of even the semblance of self-seeking; and it does not



Calhoun in Early Life.

appear that he was ever swerved from the line of obvious duty by any anxiety for the Presidential office and its opportunities, honors, and allurements. The fatal defect in his moral and mental equipment was the hallucination that governed it. He believed in the inmost of his being that slavery was right and good, only

good, and that slavery as it then existed in the domestic institutions of the South could live there and in the territories to be acquired, compatible with the Federal Union and as undisturbed (if men did well), as any of the humblest and least important domestic concerns of either section of the Union. At that time Seward had not published his startling statement that there was an irrepressible conflict between the two systems of labor. Lincoln had not proclaimed the doctrine that the Union could not exist half slave and half free. Calhoun spent seven years of his early manhood in the North —four years at Yale College and three at the law school of Litchfield, Ct. Yet in that time he failed to gain any clear idea of the temper of the Northern people on the slavery question or to discern that they had any moral ideas whatever on the problem that was to be the one great burden of his mature life and his old age.

He was a young lawyer just beginning to practice at the bar at Abbeville, S. C., when the first mutterings of the war with England (1812) began to be heard. He was an ardent, youthful patriot when the bloody affair of the Chesapeake and the Shannon, off the coast of New England, occurred, in 1807, and he was one of the committee of citizens of South Carolina to draw up an indignant protest against that outrage upon the seas. He was twenty-nine years old when, in 1811, he first took his seat in the lower house of Congress, to which he

had been elected and which met in special session in the crisis of the last great struggle between the republic and Great Britain. Of his private life we know very little. He seems to have destroyed much of that variety of document which is known after a man's death as his "literary remains." His correspondence, memoranda, and other private papers were bequeathed to a friend living in Virginia, under certain restrictions, and it is said that during the War of the Rebellion much of this accumulation was lost or destroyed. He was a planter and a slave-owner, and his estate at Fort Hill, S. C., was well managed and prosperous. His slaves were well treated and they came to him as an umpire, judge, and friend. A rigid justice characterized his management and regulated all his doings with the highest and the lowest. One biographer says that "his countenance at rest was strikingly marked by decision and firmness; in conversation or when speaking, it became highly animated and expressive. His large, dark, brilliant, penetrating eyes strongly impressed all who encountered their glances. When addressing the Senate he stood firm, erect, accompanying his delivery with an angular gesticulation. His manner of speaking was energetic, ardent, and rapid, and marked by a solemn earnestness which inspired a strong belief in his sincerity and deep conviction. He very rarely indulged in figures of speech, and seldom left any doubt as to his meaning." He appears to have been utterly destitute of either

Calhoun's Home at Fort Hill, S. C.

wit or humor. Nathan Sargent says of him: "Able as Mr. Calhoun certainly was, he found an antagonist in Mr. Clay too adroit and ready for him. He required time to prepare his matter and arrange his ideas, even to select his words. Mr. Clay did not, at least in a personal controversy. As he said, he was self-poised, ever ready, he could fire off-hand without rest. Mr. Calhoun, on the contrary, must have time to load and take deliberate aim. In doing so he was sure to hit and penetrate the most vulnerable point of his antagonist, but while he was doing this his antagonist would have hit him in a half dozen places."

I have said that he was destitute of humor, but he was sometimes the cause of wit in others. Even Webster, who seldom employed any pleasantry in his speeches in the Senate, was provoked into a humorous sally when Calhoun, on going into the Cabinet of John Tyler, landed in the camp of his former enemies. Webster referred to a mock play written in England by some wit to ridicule the sentimentality of a certain German school of literature. Two strangers meet at an inn; suddenly one springs up and exclaims: "A sudden thought strikes me; let us swear eternal friendship." The offer was instantly accepted. Mr. Webster graphically described the contest in which he and his friends and Senator Calhoun and his friends were and had been long engaged, and when victory was at last apparently in their grasp, the South Carolina Senator suddenly cries out to his enemies,

"Halloo! a sudden thought strikes me; I abandon my allies; they have always been my oppressors; let you and I swear eternal friendship."

It is curious to note how Calhoun advanced his lines of the defence of slavery from year to year. His attention had been attracted to the breaking out of abolitionism in the North. He deprecated these distant attacks upon the cherished institution of slavery, and he appeared to think that the Northern Senators were blamable because they did not by some process which he did not himself explain suppress the words which so excited his anger. He appeared to think that wordy fulminations from Washington or from the South would deaden or misdirect the moral sense of the North, then very slowly awakening to the enormity of the crime of human slavery. Suddenly, in January, 1836, his attention was aroused by the appearance in the Senate of petitions for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia. The attacks of these abolition petitions were not in the least directed against slavery in the States, but solely against slavery in the District; but from his point of view all petitions on the subject of slavery were in themselves a "foul slander on nearly one-half of the States of the Union." It made no difference to him that their ultimate result was unpromising. His objection was that unless an undoubted provision of the Constitution compelled the receiving of such petitions, it was the duty of the Senate to reject them at the door. He took the

ground that Congress had no jurisdiction whatever over the subject of slavery in whatever form it might be presented, and no more power over it in the District of Columbia than in the States. The Senate, however, decided to receive the petitions and then to reject them.

His next line was drawn at the exclusion of so-called "incendiary documents" from the mails. These documents were tracts, books, or papers containing arguments designed to show that human slavery was wicked and that its maintenance was not in any way economical to the States in which it existed; but it pleased Mr. Calhoun and others to assume that these documents were incendiary, because, as they said, they were designed to foment insurrection and risings among the people held in slavery. His contention was that "the internal peace and security of the States are under the protection of the States themselves, to the entire exclusion of all authority and control on the part of Congress. It belongs to them and not to Congress to determine what is or what is not calculated to disturb their peace and security." President Jackson had recommended that the mails should be closed to all publications tainted with the spirit of abolitionism, and he invited Congress to pass a law prohibiting "under severe penalties the circulation in the Southern States, through the mails, of incendiary publications intended to instigate slaves to insurrection." As a matter of fact, no such publications had ever been issued, and what the President really wanted was to ex-

clude from the mails all printed matter designed to shake any man's faith in the morality and righteousness of slavery. Calhoun introduced a bill providing that postmasters who knowingly transmitted or delivered papers treating of slavery in any way contrary to the laws of the State should be punished by fine and imprisonment. His theory was that the State, and not the Federal Congress, should determine what should be regarded as contrary to the laws bearing upon this question.

His next step was that slavery in the abstract was not an evil, as many (even slaveholders) had admitted that it was. He took the high ground that negro slavery was "a positive good," and said: "The relation now existing in the slave-holding States between the two races is, instead of an evil, a good, a positive good." And his argument was that the negroes were benefited by slavery because their moral condition was better than it would have been in the wilds of Africa, and that it was a blessing for native-born Americans of the negro race to be kept in slavery because it had been a blessing to their ancestors for generations back. He said: "The white or European race is not degenerated. It has kept up with its brethren in other sections of the Union where slavery does not exist. It is odious to make comparisons, but I appeal to all States whether the South is not equal in virtue, intelligence, patriotism, courage, disinterestedness, and all the higher qualities which adorn our nature."

Once more he advanced his lines when new territory was acquired by the United States. His theory was that the Constitution permitted slavery everywhere until it was deliberately recognized or deliberately disallowed by legal statutes. Singularly enough, he clung loyally and tenaciously to the idea that slavery and the Union could exist together amicably, and whatever were his vagaries on the subject of States rights and nullification, it must be said of him that up to his latest breath he continued sincerely devoted to the Federal Union. He was not a disunionist; he did not plot for a dissolution of the Union, and it is gross injustice to charge him, as some have charged him, with being ready to consent to the establishment of a Southern confederacy in order that he might be the president of a new republic after having failed in his ambition to be President of the Federal Union. As early as 1839 he astonished the Senate by asserting with great vehemence that "a dissolution of the Union had ever been and would for all future time remain an imaginary danger." Referring to the compromise tariff he said: "It terminated honestly and fairly, and without the sacrifice of any interest, one of the most dangerous controversies that ever disturbed the Union or endangered its existence, not the danger of dismemberment, as we learn from the Senator [Buchanan] was anticipated abroad. No, the danger lay in a different direction. Dismemberment is not the only mode by which our union may be destroyed. It is a fed-

eral union, a union of sovereign States, and can be as effectually and much more easily destroyed by consolidation as by dismemberment. . . . The constant struggle is to enlarge and not to divide, and there neither is nor ever has been the least danger that our union should terminate in dissolution." At another time, in a letter to the citizens of Athens, Ga., he said, referring to the peculiar institution of the South: "The Constitution has placed in our power ample means, short of secession or disunion, to protect ourselves."

More than any other, Calhoun was responsible for the annexation of Texas, although he passionately denied all responsibility for the war with Mexico which followed and which he supported with languor. War was always distasteful to him, although he sounded the clarion-call to arms when the country was in danger from the aggressions of England and France. Being called by President Tyler to fill the place of Secretary of State, from which office Webster had been conveniently shuffled out, he put on foot negotiations for the annexation of Texas. By an ingenious device this was called at that time the re-annexation of Texas, the territory having been part of what was known as the Florida purchase when the contiguous territory became absorbed into the Federal Union. By some miscarriage of diplomacy, as Southern statesmen always declared, that region lying west of Louisiana and east of the Rio Grande became the property of Mexico. When the prov-

ince declared its independence from Mexico, it was well understood that this was only a step preliminary to demanding admission into the Federal Union. While negotiations were pending, a treaty for annexation having been rejected by the Senate, James K. Polk was nominated by the Democrats as the advocate of immediate annexation, and at the next succeeding session of Congress the project was again renewed, and Calhoun, who had returned to the Senate, became one of its most ardent supporters. After a series of adventures not altogether creditable to American diplomacy or American good faith, the country was plunged into war with Mexico. Calhoun, while publicly accepting the imputation of being the author of the annexation of Texas, insisted that the responsibility for the war belonged to the President, who had violated the Constitution by sending troops on his own personal authority into the disputed territory.

Finally, annexation being an accomplished fact, the question of slavery in the Territories again came before Congress for settlement. Calhoun not only denied any power of Congress to exclude slavery from the Territories, but in still stronger terms denied the power to do it on the part of the inhabitants or legislators of those Territories. His contention was that only a sovereign State could legislate on the subject of slavery. He suggested that the Constitution of the United States, extending into the Territories acquired from Mexico, would operate to repeal the existing local Mexican laws abolishing sla-

very. And again he insisted that if the South wished to save the Union or save herself, she must arouse to instant action and hold no connection with any party in the North not prepared to enforce the guarantees of the Constitution in favor of the South.

He was a "strict constructionist," to use a phrase very familiar in those days as relating to slavery and the Constitution, but he was somewhat inconsistent when other matters were involved. For instance, he was early one of the most ardent supporters of the policy of internal improvements. He projected a national road from Washington to New Orleans *via* Abingdon, Va., Knoxville, Tenn.; thence through Alabama, passing near Cahawba, and so on to New Orleans. This, of course, was not a railroad, but a great national highway, the iron horse not then having made his appearance on the continent. Among other of his schemes for the binding of the Union together by arteries of commerce were the opening of an inland navigation from New York to Savannah by a canal from New York to Philadelphia; the canal uniting the Delaware and Susquehanna Rivers; a canal from Chesapeake Bay to the Potomac at Washington; the Dismal Swamp Canal, uniting Chesapeake Bay with Albemarle Sound, and so on to Savannah; the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal, as a channel of commerce for the great West, and a national highway from Washington to Buffalo. All of these public improvements were on lines which in these later days would be regarded as strain-

ing the Constitution of the Republic rather severely. In 1825, in a speech to his neighbors at Abbeville, S. C., he said: "No man would reprobate more pointedly than myself any concerted union between States for interested or sectional objects. Such concert would be against the spirit of our Constitution, which was intended to bind all the States in one common bond of union and friendship." And yet only a few years after this he was pleading for a "concerted union" which should defend slavery and put that institution so far above the flying arrows of its adversaries that it would be forever impregnable.

A study of the history of statesmen often reveals strange contradictions and startling changes in political opinions. For example, when preparations for the war of 1812 engaged the attention of the younger politicians of South Carolina, the patriotic New Englanders were attracted by their boisterous patriotism, and the idea was entertained in both sections that it was possible to form a coalition between South Carolina and New England to put down the "Virginia Dynasty," as it was called, whose narrow and anti-commercial policy had greatly annoyed both sections. And yet the time came when New England and South Carolina were virtually arming themselves against each other and declaring a policy of non-intercourse.

It is not certain whether Calhoun will be best known in history as the ardent defender of slavery or as the great nullifier. The States rights

doctrine of Calhoun and his school was not, as its supporters maintained, necessarily secession or war, though it might lead eventually to both, as we have already seen. Calhoun insisted, with strange lack of logic, that the union of the States was really more secure by the establishment of his theory of States rights than it could be in any other way. The tariff of 1828 was extremely distasteful to the people of South Carolina, and the Calhoun school of politicians resolved that it should not be enforced. Calhoun's argument was that the State, having determined to protect its citizens by an act of nullification, would put an impassable barrier in the way of any penalty or sentence imposed by the Federal courts in consequence of an act of obedience to the State statute. Nullification was an act by the State nullifying within the borders of that State any law of the Federal Congress which might be distasteful to a majority of the citizens of the State. Calhoun contended that nullification did not disturb the legal relation between the State and the Union, but rather confirmed it. He said that the States had "entered" the Federal Union and that that entrance implied a free action on their part without binding any of the States to irremovable consequences thereafter. Force could not be employed by the Federal Government because the question was a moral one, and no physical resistance could be taken.

The Legislature of South Carolina, in November, 1832, passed an ordinance declaring the tariff act of 1828 null and void. It was also de-

Calhoun's Library and Office.

clared that the payment of duties should not be enforced within the State, and that any attempt on the part of the Federal Government to enforce its laws would absolve the State from all connection with the Union and it would immediately establish a separate and independent government. Secession would ensue if nullification were not agreed to by the Federal Government. Great excitement in South Carolina followed the passage of this ordinance, and President Jackson replied to it with a proclamation and a message to Congress threatening to apply physical pressure to the rebels of the Palmetto State. It was even said (although this statement was never verified) that Jackson threatened to hang Calhoun "as high as Haman." Jackson was a bold and sometimes reckless officer, but nobody knew better than he that he had no power to hang even a rebel leader, and Calhoun's personal courage was certainly equal to any emergency, and it would be unjust to suppose that he was for a moment deterred from his course by any menace from General Jackson.

Various expedients to dissolve the terrifying complication were proposed from the different States. While warlike operations were going on under the orders of President Jackson and General Scott, Clay introduced in Congress a new tariff which practically abandoned the policy of protection and conceded to South Carolina the principle for which she was contending. Peace was restored, and Calhoun and the nullifiers consented to postpone secession.

Clay's compromise bill, according to Thomas H. Benton, "made its first appearance in the House late in the evening, when members were gathering up their overcoats for a walk home to their dinners, was passed before their coats had got on their back, and the dinner which was waiting had but little time to cool before the astonished members, their work done, were at the table to eat it." South Carolina was appeased and the Union saved.

One of the most picturesque incidents in the career of Calhoun was his final break with President Jackson. Calhoun was a Cabinet minister during the Florida campaign, in which Jackson, as commander of the Federal forces, had carried things with a high hand. Without instructions, and without authority of law, he had conducted executions and had moved his troops in disregard of international law or usage. His course was severely criticised by the strict constructionists, but it commanded enthusiastic applause from the people of the United States. Years afterward, when Jackson was President and Calhoun was serving a second term as Vice-President, with an expectation of succeeding to the Presidency, the celebrated Eaton scandal broke out. Mrs. Eaton was the wife of Senator Eaton, of Tennessee, and by her light conduct had brought scandal upon herself and her husband. The wives of Cabinet ministers and other high functionaries refused to recognize Mrs. Eaton. Among others, Vice-President Calhoun and Mrs. Calhoun fell under the ban of President Jack-

son's displeasure, that functionary having endeavored to dragoon Washington society into receiving Mrs. Eaton on terms of favor. With great rage and honest indignation, President Jackson regarded as his enemy every man who would not accept Mrs. Eaton.

Unfortunately for the Vice-President, General Jackson about this time learned that Calhoun, when in the Cabinet, was one of those who strongly criticised General Jackson's recklessness in his operations against the Seminoles in Florida. Doubtless the General in this matter had acted in good faith, but President Monroe and the Cabinet, including Calhoun, did not agree with the view which Jackson then took of his own course. Calhoun insisted that the capture of Pensacola was an act of war against Spain and a violation of the Constitution, and that he had not only acted without but against his own instructions. Now (April, 1830) Calhoun's position on the Florida question was revealed to Jackson. This, added to the opposition of the Calhoun family in the matter of Mrs. Eaton, set Andrew Jackson in a towering rage. The breach with Jackson was irreparable. It was the deathblow of the Presidential aspirations of Calhoun, who, in the language of one of the historians of the period (William Wirt), "had blasted his prospects of future advancement forever." Jackson was thenceforth his bitterest foe, and every particle of influence that he had was thrown against Calhoun and in favor eventually of Martin Van Buren. Von Holst, in his account of this grand

breaking-up, says: "Calhoun himself remained to the end of his life firmly convinced that Van Buren was the engineer who had constructed the ingenious battery for the explosion. Though there is no documentary proof of it, yet it can be hardly doubted that Van Buren did in fact take part in devising the scheme, but he was too wary and too cunning in such transactions ever to do himself what could be done as well or even better by some devoted friend."

It may be said of Calhoun that after this alienation, which resulted in one of the bitterest disappointments of his life, he was in reality a party by himself. For even in his ardent and incessant defence of slavery and pitiless crusade against all who dared to wag their tongues against that institution, he did not always have with him the sympathy and support of the slave-holding politicians of his own section. He failed to see that resolutions and speeches, which he multiplied indefinitely, could not smother the volcanic fire that was slowly gathering head under the crust of Northern society. He seemed to think that these "words, words, words" ought in some way to silence the growing clamor of the North against the cherished institutions of the South. He lamented the destruction of the equipoise which had existed in the Senate between the slave-holding States and the non-slave-holding States. With constant iteration he turned to this as the source of all his woes. To this single idea, the defence and elevation of slavery, he remained true to the last.

His health gradually failed, and though his eye did not lose its brilliancy or his intellectual force abate, it was plain that his days were numbered, and on the 4th of March, 1850, having been absent from the Senate many weeks, he appeared in the chamber supported by his friends, who escorted him to his seat. The so-called compromise measures of 1850 were under discussion, and he asked permission of the Senate, being too feeble to deliver his address, that his friend, Senator Mason, of Virginia, should read it for him. The address was, in fact, only a recapitulation of what had been urged again and again in the South and by the Southern Senators on the floor, charging an aggression by the general government and the North on the rights of the South, and insisting that the true purpose of the North was to destroy slavery in the States where it had existed since the original articles of confederation were agreed to. "The strongest cord of a political character," he said, "consists of the many and strong ties that have held together the two great parties. If this agitation goes on, the same force, acting with increased intensity, will finally snap every cord, when nothing will be left to hold the States together except by force." His speech over, the great nullifier and defender of slavery, who had spent his latest breath for the preservation and perpetuation of slavery, withdrew. He died on the 31st of March, 1850. He was eulogized by Webster, Benton, and other distinguished statesmen who were his contemporaries.

From the day of his death until the Confederate flag fell at Appomattox the logical consequences of his life and teachings went on and on, increasing in force and intensity until the fabric that he had so laboriously reared fell in ruins. To the last moment he manifested the deepest interest and concern in the troubles of his country. "The South, the poor South, God knows what will become of her," murmured his trembling lips; but he died with that serenity of mind which only a clear conscience can give on the death-bed. On February 12, 1847, he said in the Senate: "If I know myself, if my head were at stake I would do my duty, be the consequences what they might." It was his solemn conviction that throughout his life he had faithfully done his duty both to the Union and to his section. Because as he honestly believed slavery to be good, "a positive good," he had never been able to see that it was impossible to serve at the same time the Union and his section.

Thomas H. Benton.

## IV.

## THOMAS H. BENTON.

In one of the public squares of the city of St. Louis there stands a bronze statue of Thomas H. Benton. The right hand points westward, and on the pedestal are inscribed these words:

"There is the East.
There is India."

It is odd that so little is said by the biographers of Benton about his early, incessant, and active efforts to promote the building of a railway across the continent. He was one of the first statesmen of the country to advocate the building of such a road. He was one of the earliest to direct the adventurous explorations in the far West, and to encourage overland transit by wagon to the Pacific coast. He was engaged in these labors long before the discovery of gold in California. While the right of American possession of the mouth of the Columbia was as yet unsettled, he threw himself into the contest for the acquisition of that territory with tremendous zeal; and as early as 1819 he wrote on all these topics. When he entered Congress, in 1820, he expounded his projects for overland communication, and renewed his attempts to induce the Government to engage in the great enterprises of road-building and ex-

ploration. In the prosecution of this work, he sought out hunters, trappers, and voyageurs, and absorbed their information, pumped them dry of all the facts which they had acquired; and as a more correct scientific knowledge of the unknown wilderness became accessible, his views took shape in the proposals that finally culminated in the building of the great Central Pacific Railroad.

Of course, when the plans for building the Pacific Railroad were finally adopted, gold had been discovered in California, and the United States had secured a foothold upon those distant shores; and Benton, with intense pride in his country, and more broad in his nationality than many of the statesmen of that period, did not stop to consider whether there should be a Northern or a Southern trans-continental road, but he argued boldly for the proposed central route which was subsequently adopted. He showed the character of the region through which this line should run, the ease by which the passes through the Rocky Mountains could be utilized, and he prophesied a great and rapid increase of States and communities as one of the results which would certainly follow the building of the road. In the course of one of his speeches, he made an interesting comparison of the courses of trade and commerce at different periods of the history of the world, and argued that, as we had finally reached the Pacific coast we had taken the position where our trade with the kingdoms of the Orient would make us independent of Europe.

Years before, when the Mississippi River seemed to be the most remote western border of our Republic, and when nobody had penetrated the boundless wilderness that stretches to the foot of the Rocky Mountains, and when nobody supposed we could ever people so vast a territory as that which then lay unclaimed far to the westward, Benton had said that the Rocky Mountains should be our natural frontier line on the westward, a barrier beyond which we could not pass; and he had expressed his belief that on the Pacific coast there would grow up a friendly republic. But when the discovery of gold and the acquisition of California changed all this, he, too, changed his view of the situation, and held that we should have, wherever possible, no boundaries but the two oceans. In considering the establishment of the great marine lines across the Pacific Ocean debouching from California, we should never forget the prophetic words of Benton, "There is India."

Benton was pre-eminently a Western man. He possessed all the traits of the aggressive, alert, and self-asserting pioneers of the West. It was in the great community of which he formed so picturesque and towering a figure, that was originated the once familiar phrase, "Manifest Destiny." Benton believed in the future vastness of his country, and with his boastful and sometimes inflated oratory he forever preached the doctrine of Manifest Destiny. In every direction wherever territory was to be acquired, to the southwest, westward, and northwest, there

his voice was ever directed, ringing and inciting to action and to acquisition the cheerful and ready ranks of his fellow-Westerners.

It should be borne in mind that in the earlier years of Benton's time, all the territory lying westward of the Ohio, whether to the south or to the north, was known by the comprehensive title of "The West." At that time the line of demarcation between the East and the West was far more distinct than that which separated the North from the South, and as the latter boundary became sharper and more intense, so did the line betwixt East and West become more vague and more distantly removed from the Eastern States.

Benton not only favored the opening and extension of lines of communication with the wild and trackless Northwest, but also with Mexico and with the territories which we subsequently acquired by the Mexican war. He advocated the establishment of military posts on the Upper Missouri, one of which is now known by his name, Fort Benton; and throughout his career he incessantly pleaded for the cultivation of amicable relations with the Indian tribes, their removal to reservations where they should be amply protected, and the development of the regions from which they had been taken. Inland navigation and great post roads, military roads, and trading trails to the far Southwest, were among his hobbies, of which it must be confessed he had many. The treaty with Spain by which we secured Florida and other acquisi-

tions were matters that greatly cheered the soul of Benton, even before he entered the Senate. In one of his speeches when the Florida purchase was under consideration he said: "The magnificent valley of the Mississippi is ours, with all its fountains, springs, and floods, and woe to the statesman who shall undertake to surrender one drop of its water, one inch of its soil, to any foreign power." We can well understand how these brave words fell with kindling effect among the masterful and ambitious Westerners.

Benton was born in North Carolina, and his mother, early left a widow, took her young brood of children to a tract of land owned by her husband, twenty-five miles south of Nashville. On this land the family plantation was laid out, and in due course of time "Widow Benton's tract" became Bentontown, a name under which it is known to this day. Here Thomas Hart Benton was reared under the tender care and firm management of his mother, a woman of the highest type. In the library left by his father the lad found a goodly array of the best books of that period. These he studied with a devouring eagerness, and he has said in his autobiography that his knowledge of English history was largely drawn from the voluminous "State Trials" which formed a part of this library. Benton's education does not appear to have been at any time directed by any other guidance than his own tastes and notions of what was desirable, except when, later on, under the encouragement of older friends, he mastered the intricacies of the law

Joining of the Central and Union Pacific.

The continent spanned—scene at Promontory Point, Utah, May 10, 1869. The culmination of plans advocated for many years by Benton.

(From the only existing photograph.)

and was admitted to the bar. Of his mother he says in his autobiography: "All the minor virtues, as well as the greater, were cherished by her, and her house, the resort of the eminent men of the time, was the abode of temperance, modesty, decorum; a pack of cards was never seen in her house. From such a mother all the children received the impress of future character, and she lived to see the fruits of her pious and liberal cares—living as a widow above fifty years —and to see her eldest son half through his Senatorial career and taking his place among the historic men of the country, for which she had begun so early to train him. These details deserve to be noted, though small in themselves, as showing how much the after life of the man may depend upon the early care and guidance of a mother." Benton lived a temperate and abstemious life; he was a total abstainer from his youth, never used tobacco, never played a game of chance, and did not as a rule attend public amusements. When questioned about his temperate habits, later in life, he used to say: "My mother did not wish me to drink wine or spirits, and I never have."

In his autobiography, referring to his wife, who was long an invalid, he said: "Mrs. Benton died in 1854, having been struck with paralysis in 1844, and from the time of that calamity her husband was never known to go to any place of festivity or amusement." His literary work, which was great and laborious, was done at her bedside during these years of pain and languishing.

But there was another side to Benton's character. He lived in a time of turbulence, and a certain warlike roughness then pervaded all ranks of society in the West. His first notable quarrel was with Andrew Jackson in the streets of Nashville, Tenn. His brother Jesse and William Carroll had become involved in a duel. Jackson was Carroll's second, and although no blood was shed in the duel, the two Bentons, Carroll, and Jackson and some of their friends, were drawn into a disgraceful fracas. Jackson advanced upon Colonel Benton and struck him over the head with a riding-whip. A general *mêlée* followed, pistols and knives were freely used, and Jackson came out of this promiscuous contest with a bullet in his left shoulder. Later, in St. Louis, while Missouri was yet a Territory, and Benton was editing a paper and slashing around recklessly in every direction, he was drawn into a more serious quarrel with one Lucas. The result was a duel, in which Lucas was killed. They had fought twice on Bloody Island, near St. Louis, a well-known duelling resort. On the first occasion both were wounded; on the second, Lucas fell. A biographer of Lucas's family has recently remarked, with unconscious humor, of the senior Lucas: "This gentleman was one of the most remarkable men who ever settled west of the Mississippi River. . . . Toward the close of his life Judge Lucas became melancholy and dejected, the result of domestic affliction, for six of his sons met death by violence." It is barely possible that

the five sons, of whom we have no other mention, came to their deaths by quarrels provoked.

At that time duelling was common throughout the United States, more especially in the South and West, and on the frontier a man was not only expected to be called to engage in a duel as principal or second occasionally, but also to challenge whenever he considered his "honor" called in question.

The affray with Jackson was in 1813, and in his autobiography (dictated when Benton was on his death-bed, in which he speaks of himself in the third person) the writer referred to the Nashville fracas with profound regret, and added: "A duel at St. Louis ended fatally, of which Colonel Benton has not been heard to speak except among intimate friends, and to tell of the pang which went through his heart when he saw the young man fall, and would have given the world to see him restored to life. As the proof of the manner in which he looks upon all these scenes, and his desire to bury all remembrance of them forever, he has had all those papers burnt which relate to them, that future curiosity or industry should not bring to light what he wishes had never happened."

The bringing in of Missouri as a slave State, with human bondage expressly provided for in its constitution, caused an intense excitement throughout the country. It was this act which resulted in the adoption of what was known as the "Missouri Compromise." Although Benton was himself averse to the further extension of

slavery, he did not hesitate to advocate the admission of the new State with slavery in its constitution, and doubtless his newspaper was a tremendous factor in the problem which was solved by the final admission of the State.

He was now elected to the Senate, and although some details of the constitution of the new State remained unsettled, he at once took his seat. In the somewhat self-conscious autobiography which I have just quoted, Benton thus speaks of his election to the Senate: "From that time his life was in the public eye, and the bare enumeration of the measures of which he was author and the prime promoter would be almost a history of Congress legislation. The enumeration is unnecessary here. The long list is known throughout the length and breadth of the land, repeated with the familiarity of household words from the great cities of the seaport to the lonely cabins of the frontier, and studied by the little boys who feel an honorable ambition beginning to stir within their bosoms and a laudable desire to know something of the history of their country." It is melancholy to reflect that although scarcely three-quarters of a century has passed, "the little boys" of whom Benton speaks with so much assurance probably know very little of "the measures of which he was author."

In the Senate, which he entered in 1820, he served thirty consecutive years. His talents, which were very great, and his energies, which were tremendous, were devoted to an infinite

variety of useful measures. The land laws of the country early engaged his attention. A pioneer himself, he devoted all his activities to reforming the statutes and to facilitate the means by which public lands could be occupied and owned by actual settlers. He advocated the securing to all actual settlers of land title by preemption, a periodical reduction of prices after the lands had been a long time in market, and donations of homesteads to worthy and industrious persons who might be too poor to buy. With a dogged persistence peculiarly his own, Benton forced his views upon these subjects upon Congress year in and year out, in season and out of season. He lived to see nearly every one of these principles finally adopted into the land system of the United States, with the exception of the homestead law, which was passed by both houses of Congress and vetoed by Buchanan. That law, however, finally became operative in 1862, during the administration of Abraham Lincoln.

The system of electing President and Vice-President by the so-called Electoral College was another topic which early engaged his attention. He advocated in 1824 an amendment to the Constitution to abolish the Electoral College and to make the vote more nearly come straight from the people. On this topic he said: "I should esteem the incorruptibility of the people, their disinterested desire to get the best man for President, to be more than a counterpoise to all the advantages which might be derived from the

superior intelligence of a more enlightened but smaller and therefore more corruptible body. I should be opposed to the intervention of electors, because the double process to elect a man would paralyze the spirit of the people and destroy the life of an election itself. Doubtless this machinery was introduced into our Constitution for the purpose of softening the action of the democratic element, but it also softens the interest of the people in the result of the election itself. It places them at too great a distance from their first servant. It interposes a body of men between the people and the object of their choice and gives a false direction to the gratitude of the President elected. He feels himself indebted to the electors who collected the votes of the people, and not to the people who gave their votes to the electors." Our later experience in political affairs has shown that Benton in this case was partly right and partly wrong.

Very much to his credit, too, was his attitude on what was called the Spoils System. In his autobiography he makes it a point to say that none of his blood relations had ever asked for office and none had ever mingled in any schemes for the division of patronage. During Jackson's time was imported into the system of national government the plan of making public office a reward for partisan service. Benton, later in life, said: "The expiration of the four years' term came to be considered as the termination and vacation of all the offices on which it fell and the creation of vacancies, to be filled at the option of

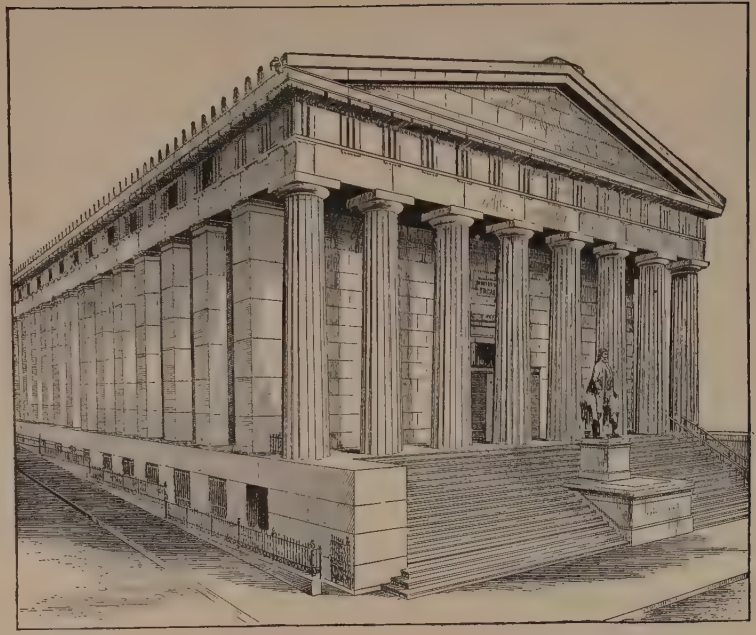
the President." He added: "I consider sweeping removals as now practised by both parties a great political evil in our country, injurious to individuals, to the public service, to the purity of elections, and to the harmony and union of the people. . . . It converts elections into scrambles for office and degrades the Government into an office for rewards and punishments, and divides the people of the Union into two adverse parties, each in its turn as it becomes dominant to strip and proscribe the other."

Although a slave-holder from a slave State, Benton, with his broad-minded and generous instincts, could not look with any degree of tolerance upon the extension of slavery into the Territories, and when John C. Calhoun began to proclaim his fine-spun theory of State rights and the right of nullification, Benton was by the side of Andrew Jackson battling for the Union and opposing nullification. His attitude in this long and arduous contest made him the life-long foe of Calhoun, who, though he forgave others who fought against him, notably Clay and Webster, the two Whigs, could not forgive Benton, the Jacksonian Democrat. When the project to annex Texas came before the people of the United States, Benton raised his voice against the scheme. He boldly and forcibly disclosed the real motives of the promoters of this great enterprise, and said that although it was mixed up with speculative jobs and political intrigues, disunion was at the bottom of it all. He said that the cry had already been raised: "Texas without

the Union rather than the Union without Texas," and he said that "a Southern confederacy stretching from the Atlantic to the Californias is the cherished vision of disappointed ambition."

He was with Jackson also in his war upon the United States Bank, and early in 1831 he had moved against a recharter of that institution, thus showing himself really in advance of Jackson in his hostility to the bank. He did not assail the bank as unconstitutional, but rather dwelt upon the aspects of the case which would be more likely to attract public attention. He said that the bank had too much power over the people and the Government, over business and over politics, and was too much disposed to exercise that power to the prejudice of freedom and equality which should prevail in a republic.

He said: "I am willing to see the charter expire without providing any substitute for the present bank. I am willing to see the currency of the Federal Government left to the hard money mentioned and intended in the Constitution." Again he said: "Gold and silver are the best currency for a republic. It suits the men of middle property and the working-people best, and if I was going to establish a workingman's party it should be on the basis of hard money—a hard-money party against a paper party." Utterances like these, which attracted wide attention both in this country and in Europe, gave him the nickname of "Old Bullion," a title by which he was known to the day of his death. One of Benton's darling projects was the devel-



The Sub-Treasury Building in Wall Street, New York City.

opment of what is called the Sub-Treasury system of the United States. It was first made known under the title of the Independent Treasury Bill. He succeeded in getting it through the Senate twice. The first time it was lost in the House of Representatives, but on the second venture, toward the close of President Van Buren's term, his firmness and pertinacity were rewarded. The bill passed the Senate by a considerable majority, went through the House after a bitter contest, and became a law. From this arose the system which to the present day is satisfactorily known as the Sub-Treasury.

Another of his hobbies (if a statesman's views can be called a hobby) was the repeal of the salt tax. The Government laid an odious tax upon salt, and while he devoted himself to the general subject of the tariff in regard to specific abuses, he advocated with great persistence the plan of making salt free; and on all occasions, whether pertinent or not, with dogged persistence he lugged in the salt tax and insisted upon its repeal. In his "Thirty Years' View," speaking of himself and his attacks on this odious duty, he says: "He called it a heartless and tyrant tax, as inexorable as it was omnipotent and omnipresent; a tax which no economy could avoid, no poverty could shun, no privation escape, no cunning elude, no force resist, no dexterity avert, no curses repulse, no prayers could deprecate." To this he added: "Twelve years have passed away, two years more than the siege of Troy lasted, since I began this contest. Nothing dis-

heartened by so many defeats in so long a time, I prosecute the war with unabated vigor, and relying upon the goodness of the cause, firmly calculate upon ultimate and final success." One cannot help thinking that although the tax was odious and doubtless oppressive, the eloquence, erudition, and legal learning lavished upon attempts to abolish it were hardly in proportion to the extent of the evil complained of.

Benton not only loved work for work's sake, but his spirit was indomitable, defiant, and aggressive. He was simply unable to comprehend the meaning of the word "defeat." Repulsed again and again, he returned to the attack with a freshness and vigor that bore all before it. His will was iron, his purpose inflexible, and doubtless a great proportion of the successes in his long and stormy career were due to his persistence rather than to the intrinsic merits of the cause advocated. His support of the Sub-Treasury scheme and its ultimate success is one example of his triumph after many defeats, and his magnificent and picturesque crusade at the head of the so-called expungers is another. Jackson was not willing to rest on his laurels when he had succeeded in defeating all attempts to recharter the United States Bank, but in the summer of 1833 he ordered the deposits of the United States Government removed from the bank and placed in certain State banks. These institutions were subsequently known as the "pet banks." Jackson met with some difficulty in getting a Secretary of the Treasury who would venture

upon such a step, but he finally found one in Roger B. Taney, a man who afterward, as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, was able to do much more mischief than he did as Secretary of the Treasury. A tremendous storm broke out in Congress over the removal of the deposits. Clay introduced a resolution directing their return. This was defeated in the House, and Clay then introduced in the Senate a series of motions, the most important of which was his famous resolution censuring President Jackson for his action in regard to the deposits. This resolution was finally passed by a small majority, and Jackson, frantic with rage, sent in a written protest, which the Senate refused to receive. The country was agitated, the Jacksonians and anti-Jacksonians furiously assailing each other over the question. Benton immediately began a vigorous campaign for the expunging of the resolution of censure from the record of the Senate. He was met with an opposition quite as vigorous as his own, headed by Calhoun, Clay, and Webster. Finally, at the very close of Jackson's administration, Benton found himself able to make the move which was carried to a prosperous conclusion. The Expungers held a caucus and agreed to prevent any adjournment until the resolution of expunging was finally carried. Benton, like the prudent general that he was, provided in one of the committee rooms "an ample supply of cold hams, turkeys, rounds of beef, pickles, wines, and cups of hot coffee," to which the faint-hearted and weary Expungers oc-

casionally resorted to refresh themselves withal; and at last the Secretary of the Senate was ordered by resolution to draw black lines around the offensive entry in the Senate journal. Jackson, to show his gratitude and appreciation of the services of the Expungers, gave them and their wives a great dinner at the White House, Benton sitting at the head of the table.

The really heroic era of Benton's long career was that in which he fought for the National Union and defended the Republic against the insidious schemes of the nullifiers and secessionists. The Missouri Compromise of 1820 had expressly excluded slavery from the territory from which Kansas and Nebraska were afterward carved. When the bill to repeal this compromise came up in the Senate, Benton attacked it with enormous vigor, characterizing it as "a bungling attempt to smuggle slavery into the territory and throughout all the country up to the Canada line and out to the Rocky Mountains." By the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, slavery and freedom were left to shift for themselves in the vast region now occupied by all of the States west and north of Missouri. The compromise, Benton contended, was right, but no greater concession of principle should be made. The time had now come, he said, when the extension of slavery should be opposed in every constitutional way, and "it was an outrage to repeal a compromise which in its very nature was humiliating to the North." Said he: "The South divided and took half, and now it will not do to claim the other half."

Against this insidious aggression of the slave power, Benton spoke with great boldness and warmth. He said: "I have stood upon the Missouri Compromise for about thirty years, and mean to stand upon it to the end of my life. It is a binding covenant upon both parties, and the more so upon the South, as she imposed it."

Benton's noble and manly fight was in vain. He incurred the implacable hostility of the slave power of the South and of its leaders in the Senate. His patriotic and determined attitude finally cost him his seat in the Senate, and from this point onward, we may say, the tide ran against him. His enemies, in the midst of his fight against the extension of slavery into the Territories, circulated a series of resolutions which were based upon those of Calhoun, declaring that Congress had no power over the question of slavery in the Territories. These were sent to all of the slave-holding States, and were finally introduced into the Missouri Legislature. The Missouri resolutions were insolent and almost traitorous in tone, and demanded that slavery should be permitted to exist in all new States hereafter to be admitted, and instructed their Senators to vote accordingly. When these resolutions came to Congress, where they were introduced by Benton's colleague, Atchison, they were boldly denounced by Benton as treasonable and offensive in the highest degree. He said that they did not express the true opinions of the voters of Missouri, and he would appeal from the Legislature to the people. Benton's colleague was subsequently

known as "Dave" Atchison, and was one of the leaders of the border ruffians who invaded Kansas in the early and stormy days of that Territory.

But Benton's protests were in vain. The issue between the two sides, "the Hards," as Benton's followers were called, and "the Softs," was now sharply defined. Benton went home to Missouri, stumped the State from one end to the other, and in a series of many wonderful speeches advocated the doctrines which he had proclaimed in the Senate and which had been contravened so contemptuously by the Legislature of the State. Neither faction was able to secure a majority of the Legislature which was to have the duty of electing a successor to Benton, whose term was about to expire; and, after a deadlock lasting some weeks, the Whigs went to the support of the "Softs" and elected Benton's opponent; and so, after serving the State and the Nation faithfully for thirty years in the United States Senate, Benton was turned out for having stood manfully and loyally by the Union.

It is impossible to avoid a comparison at this point between Benton and some of the Northern Senators, notably Silas Wright, of New York, and Daniel Webster, of Massachusetts. A Southern man from a slave-holding State, Benton did not hesitate to oppose the extension of slavery into the Territories, to condemn the fugitive slave act of 1850, and to stand manfully and effectively against the slavery extremists and disunionists. He rose to meet every emergency, and up to the latest hour of his Congressional life could always

be counted upon in the ranks of the devoted patriots who defended the Union and its institutions of freedom.

When defeated for the Senate, he was not in the least cast down by this apparently overwhelming reverse. Although now an old man, he kept up the fight as bitterly as ever, and in 1852 was returned to the House of Representatives as a Union Democrat. Defeated for a second term in the House, he took the field, indefatigable as ever, as a Union Democratic candidate for Governor of Missouri. The fight was a triangular one. The Native Americans, or Know Nothings, had set their candidate in the field; the secession Democrats another; and Benton was the choice of the Union Democrats. Although seventy-four years old, his mind was as vigorous as ever, and with all the freshness and buoyancy of his early manhood he plunged into one of the most strenuous and exhaustive political fights of his lifetime. During the course of his campaign he traversed the entire State, travelling in all twelve hundred miles and making forty speeches, each one of which was two or three hours in length. Again, however, he was destined to meet with defeat. The vote was quite evenly divided among the three candidates, but Benton was the third in the race, and the extreme pro-slavery men elected their candidate by a small plurality. At last his political race was run.

Very soon after he lost his seat in the House of Representatives, he set out to finish his "Thirty Years' View," a work of the first importance

in political history, which he had undertaken while in the Senate. He now returned to this, and took it up with refreshing zest. This completed, he tackled another task, an "Abridgment of the Debates of Congress;" and when his house burned down, destroying his materials and partly completed volumes, he resumed his labor next day as though nothing had happened. It was this spirit of unconquerableness that carried him through his strenuous and stormy career with so long a train of successes following.

In 1856 he voted, like the sturdy old partisan he was, for James Buchanan, although his son-in-law, John C. Fremont, whom he greatly admired, was candidate against Buchanan. Benton took much pride in Fremont's achievements and in his courageous and dashing expeditions. In his "Thirty Years' View" he finds it impossible to conceal his amusement and satisfaction over the fact that his daughter, Mrs. Fremont, suppressed orders countermanding Fremont's second expedition in 1844. Fremont had left his home in Missouri when these orders arrived from the War Department, and Mrs. Fremont, opening the dispatches, as requested by her husband on his departure, saw that if they were forwarded, Fremont would be obliged to return. She withheld them, with the knowledge and warm approval of her father. Benton, speaking of this (to him) amusing incident, said that "this hinderance should be charged to the account of West Point officers, to whose pursuit of easy service Fremont's adventurous expeditions were

a reproach." Benton, it should be said, lost no opportunity to gibe the West Pointers, whom he hated with a perfect hatred. He had himself been commissioned in the United States army and had served as lieutenant-colonel in the war of 1812, when he was an aide-de-camp to General Jackson. Some of Benton's attacks upon the army and navy, both of which had within his lifetime covered themselves with glory in our contests with Great Britain, were inspired by partisan prejudice rather than any sound objection to the little navy and army then maintained at the expense of the Government. He ridiculed every measure designed to promote the efficiency of either branch of the public service, and insisted upon a reduction of both arms of the service to what he called "a peace footing."

Posterity should not lose sight of Benton's wise and prophetic estimate of the growth of the Republic in the Northwest. When our dispute over the Northwestern boundary began, it was urged that the region demanded by Benton and his supporters was not valuable for tillage or for mining. Benton tartly replied: "We want it, anyhow;" and when imminence of war with Great Britain was urged by the more timorous members of the Senate, he flung out this note of defiance: "I think she will take offence, do what we may in relation to this territory. She wants it herself, and means to quarrel for it if she does not fight for it. . . . Neither nations nor individuals ever escape danger by fearing it; they must face it, and defy it. An abandonment

The Benton Statue at St. Louis.

of a right for fear of bringing on an attack, instead of keeping it off, will inevitably bring on the outrage that is dreaded." This was while the Nation was still harassed by the progress of the Texas annexation scheme in the Southwest. James K. Polk was elected on the basis of a settlement with England which should give us as our northern boundary fifty-four degrees and forty minutes, the slogan of his campaign being "54–40, or fight." History records, however, that in the final settlement of that problem our boundary-line on the north was fixed at 49, by which we lost the magnificent territory now occupied by Manitoba, the Northwest Territory, and British Columbia, thereby interposing a foreign power between our own possessions and those which we have since acquired from Russia. It should be said that Benton acquiesced in this settlement without much ado.

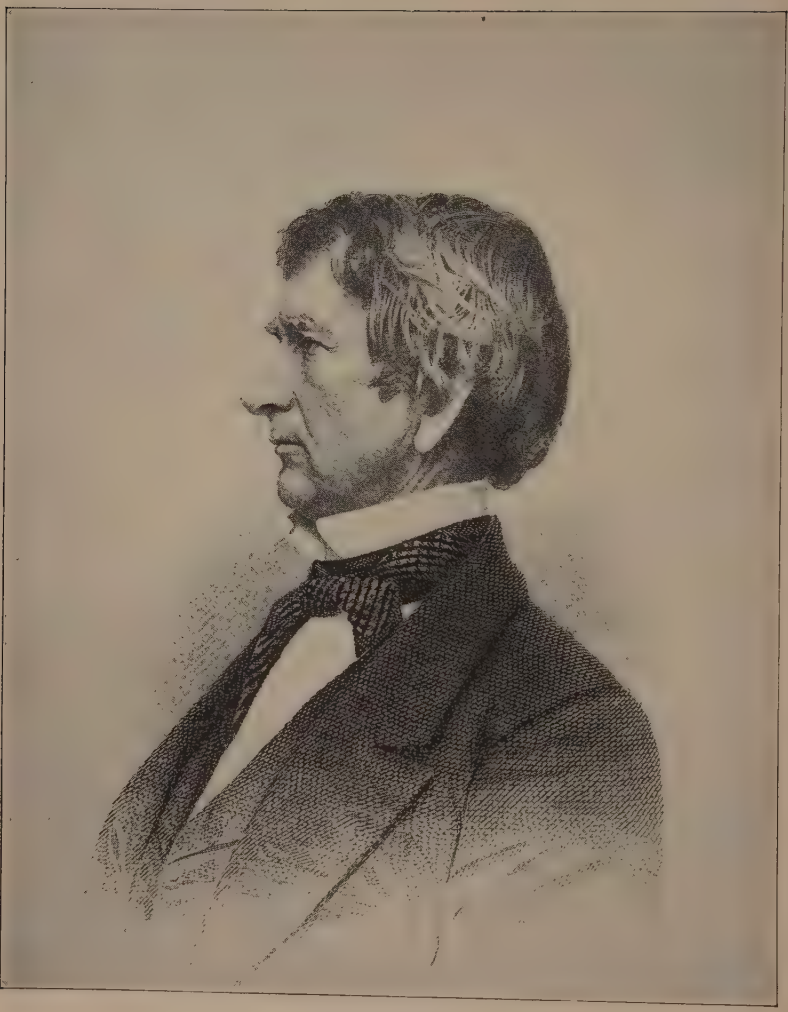
Benton was not a great orator, as Webster was, but he was a powerful pleader and an indomitable spirit, and his nature was cast in a heroic mould. Like most of the public speakers of his time, he affected classic allusion and plentifully interlarded his speeches with references to the ancients. He had a great fondness for a barbarous phrase of his own invention which he called the "principle *demos kratco*." This phrase, which he had borrowed from the Greek, he used and misused on every possible occasion in speaking and in writing. Like others of his time, he drew copiously from Greek and Roman history to illustrate his meaning; as we have seen, the

Trojan war was made use of by way of illustrating his fight against the salt tax.

One of his biographers (Roosevelt) has paid to Benton this just tribute, with which this imperfect sketch may very properly be concluded: "He was a faithful friend and a bitter foe. He was vain, proud, utterly fearless, and quite unable to comprehend such emotions as are expressed by the terms despondency and yielding. Without being a great orator or writer, or even an original thinker, he yet possessed marked ability, and his abounding vitality and marvellous memory, his indomitable energy and industry, and his tenacious persistency and personal courage, all combined to give him a position and influence such as few American statesmen have ever held. His character grew steadily to the very last. He made better speeches and was better able to face new problems when past three-score and ten than in his early youth or middle age. He possessed a rich fund of political, legal, and historical learning, and every subject that he ever handled showed traces of careful and thorough study. He was ever courteous except when provoked. His courage was proof against all fear, and he shrank from no contest, personal or political. He was sometimes narrow-minded, and always wilful and passionate, but he was honest and truthful. At all times and in all places he held every good gift he had completely at the service of the American Federal Union."

Benton died in the city of Washington in 1858,

to his latest breath, and while he could scarcely speak above a whisper, keeping up his laborious habits. In these last dying moments he dictated the autobiographical sketch which has been referred to in the early part of this chapter, and died leaving his "Abridgment of Debates" incomplete.



William H. Seward.

## V.

## WILLIAM H. SEWARD.

YOUNG men will read with sympathy William H. Seward's account of his first striking out for himself, at the age of seventeen. His father was a gentleman of education, some wealth, and high social and political position, in Central New York. Harry Seward, as he was called in his boyhood, was sent to Union College, Schenectady. A disagreement between Harry and his father arose out of some financial matters. Young Seward complained, in his own account of this affair, written many years afterward, that the more rigid his economy, the more limited was the appropriation for his expenses. Finally, the misunderstanding was increased, as he says, "by the intrusion of the accomplished tailors of Schenectady," whose bills his father thought were unreasonable; and as the lad could not submit to the shame of loss of credit, he resolved upon independence and self-maintenance. Accordingly, on the first of January, 1819, without any notice to his father or anyone else, he left Union College, as he thought forever, and went to New York by stage-coach, where he took passage with a fellow-student for Savannah. After an uneventful voyage of seven days from New York, the vessel

anchored in the river at Savannah, and he rode by stage wagon to Augusta, where he hired a gig, which landed him at Mount Zion, and he was among friends from Orange County, N. Y. Not being any longer able to hire a conveyance, he took the road on foot to Eatonton, the capital of Putnam County, Ga.; he soon found himself with nine shillings and sixpence, New York currency, soiled with the wear of travel, and almost unable to resume his journey; but he finally made his way to Eatonton, where he met the treasurer of the State, who was one of the Board of Directors of the Union Academy of Eatonton. After a cursory examination of the young man, the Directors agreed to accept him as preceptor of the new institution at the munificent sum of one hundred dollars a year and his board. As the academy was not yet finished, the directors agreed to compensate him for the delay by furnishing him with a horse and carriage in which he could travel in any part of the State, and in the interval he was to be boarded among the directors without charge. This important matter being disposed of, one of the directors of the institution said: "I am going to state something which, if you prefer, you need not reply. In your absence from the meeting of trustees they asked how old you were. I answered that I thought you were twenty. They replied that that seemed very young for such an enterprise." Mr. Seward says in his account of this incident: "I candidly confessed to my generous patron that I was only seventeen." "Well," said he,

"we will leave them to find that out for themselves."

In brief, then, Harry Seward had run away from home to undertake the management of the Union College at Eatonton, Ga., where, as he fondly hoped, he was concealed from the pursuit of his family. He was very much dismayed, however, by the intelligence that a packet of letters had been transmitted to Richardson, President of the United States Branch Bank at Savannah, from the paternal Seward, at Florida, N. Y., in which was a letter from the father to the son describing the paternal anguish and solicitude caused by the young fellow's flight from college and from home. The senior Seward implored his wandering boy to return, and he sent the necessary funds to pay his expenses and for the bills that he had incurred in the meantime. Young Seward sent his father an Eatonton newspaper which contained an advertisement announcing to the people of the State of Georgia that "William H. Seward, a gentleman of talents, educated at Union College, N. Y., had been duly appointed principal of the Union Academy," etc. His indignant father, having read the newspaper advertisement, informed the president and trustees of the college who and what kind of a person this new principal of their academy was; that "he was a much-indulged son who, without just cause and provocation, had absconded from Union College, thereby disgracing a well-acquired position and plunging his parents into profound shame and grief." The upshot of

this business was that young Seward, a few weeks later, returned to college, and in due course was graduated with all the honors.

It was during these six months in Georgia that he first came in contact with Southern slavery. In his "Autobiography," he says: "Although the planters were new and generally poor, yet I think the slaves exceeded the white population." No jealousy or prejudice at that day was manifested in regard to inquiries or discussions of slavery, but at the same time there were two kindred popular prejudices highly developed. One was a suspicion, amounting to hatred, of all emancipated persons, or free negroes, as they were called. The other a strong prejudice of an abstract nature against the lower class of adventurers from the North, called 'Yankees.' The planters entertained me always cordially, as it seemed from a regard to my acquirements, while the negroes availed themselves of every occasion to converse with a stranger who came from 'the big North,' where they understood their race to be free, but which they believed to be so far distant as to be forever inaccessible to them." Seward gained the confidence and esteem of the negroes without exciting any jealousy on the part of their masters. The effect of his observations, he says, was to confirm and strengthen the opinions he had already entertained adverse to slavery.

It should be said that in his childhood slavery had not yet been abolished in the State of New York. He early discovered in his own home that, besides his parents, brothers, and sisters,

all of whom occupied the parlor and principal bedrooms of the mansion, there were in the family two black women and one black boy, who remained exclusive tenants of the kitchen and the garret over it. The lad found their apartment much more attractive than the parlor, and their conversation a relief from the severe decorum that there prevailed. He knew that these people were black, but he did not know why, and if his parents ever uttered before him a word of disapproval of slavery, there was certainly nothing that he ever heard that made him think the negroes inferior to the white person. The two younger of his father's slaves attended school and sat by his side if they chose, but he noticed that no other black children went there.

Later on in life, after Seward had taken to himself a wife and was on a tour through Northern Virginia, in 1835, he saw this spectacle at a country tavern where he had arrived just at sunset: "A cloud of dust was seen slowly coming down the road, from which proceeded a confused noise of moaning, weeping, and shouting. Presently reaching the gate of the stable-yard, it disclosed itself. Ten naked little boys, between six and twelve years old, tied together two and two by their wrists, were all fastened to a long rope and followed by a tall, gaunt white man, who with his long lash whipped up the sad and weary procession, drove it to the horse-trough to drink, and thence to a shed, where they lay down on the ground and sobbed and moaned themselves to sleep. These were chil-

dren gathered up at different plantations by the trader, and were to be driven down to Richmond to be sold at auction and taken South." This piteous scene made an impression indelible in the mind of Seward.

It was on this same journey, when homeward bound, that Seward and his wife passed through Washington, where he was permitted an informal interview with President Jackson, of whom he received a vivid impression. Jackson's manner was courtly but dogmatic, and he said of him: "On every subject, of whatever magnitude, the President was peremptory, and it must be added that, as far as his opinions were expressed, they were intelligent and perspicuous." As I have said, Seward's circumstances were easy. He early learned to save from his professional earnings. He never lived extravagantly, but hospitably, to spend freely and give liberally. He was considered aristocratic in his tastes and pursuits, and was certainly brought up in an atmosphere of refinement and culture somewhat unusual to those early times. His tastes were literary, and although he naturally took to politics as soon as he had arrived at the years of manhood, his pursuits were always scholarly and refined. His versatility was early a marked characteristic, and he seemed to turn his mind to a great variety of diverse occupations with equal success and facility. His "Autobiography" bears on every page the impress of an original, if not a profound, mind. Domestic in his habits and devoted to his children, he turned from the

cares and anxieties of a statesman's career to impress upon his boys lessons of morality, good breeding, and patriotism, which are among the choicest treasures of his long and useful life. For example, to one of his little boys, when he was away from home, he wrote this charming letter:

"My Dear Boy: I have written a letter to Augustus, and I write one now to you. I write it with red ink so that you may know them apart. The people where I am staying are very nice people, but there is a boy here that does one very naughty thing. I saw yesterday on the mantel-piece a saucer filled with the shells of birds' eggs. Now, it is wicked to take away their eggs from the pretty little birds. It is different altogether from taking the old hen's eggs away from her. Hen's eggs are good to eat and it is right to take them. The hen does not know how many eggs she has, and therefore she does not feel sorry when you take them all away but one, and she is such an ignorant old creature that she wouldn't know it if you should take away her last egg and put a paper one in its place. But the little birds' eggs are not good to eat; they know how many eggs they have, and they are very sorry and mourn many days if you take them away. This same naughty boy got up yesterday morning, took his gun, and shot a very pretty little yellow-bird. He brought it into the house, laid it on the table, and it lay there all the morning. At noon he threw it away. Now, do you think the little boy was any happier because

he had killed that harmless little yellow-bird? Perhaps the bird has left little ones in her nest, and they too must have died before this time."

Seward's entrance into public life was early. When he was less than twenty-three years old he embarked in the political contest then raging, as an advocate of the election of John Quincy Adams, and he drew up a very strong, striking, and pungent address, in which he arraigned the "Albany Regency" and denounced the methods of Martin Van Buren's supporters. The Albany Regency was composed of leading politicians of the Jackson stripe, who held the political fortunes of the State of New York as in a grasp of iron. It was against this Regency that Seward was to be pitted, later on. His election to the State Senate was a great victory. The Whig party, which had originated in opposition to the Jackson administration and the Albany Regency, nominated Seward for Governor in 1834. He was defeated by William L. Marcy, who had a fair majority. At this time he was thirty-three years of age, and it is a curious illustration of the narrowness of the political prejudices of the time, that he was assailed by his opponents for his extreme youth and his red hair. Mr. Seward's hair was a warm auburn in tint. In his "Autobiography" he has narrated an amusing incident which occurred when he was at Long Branch, N. J., the year after his defeat. A benevolent-looking old gentleman said: "Excuse me, sir, if I ask you an obtrusive question, but I see by the papers that there was a candidate for Governor

in your State last fall—the one who was defeated—whose name was the same as yours. Pray, was he any relative of your family?" Mr. Seward had to admit that he was a near relative.

"Not your father, was it, sir?"

"No, not my father."

A pause ensued, and then, overcome by curiosity, the old gentleman returned to the attack:

"Could it have been a brother of yours?"

Mr. Seward in Early Life.

"Well, Mr. T.," said Seward, "I may as well confess to you that I am myself that unfortunate man."

"Dear me," said the other, with unaffected surprise and sympathy, "I never should have thought it, and so young, too; I am very sorry. How near did you come to being elected?"

"Not very near. I only got a hundred and sixty-nine thousand votes."

"A hundred and sixty-nine thousand votes and

not elected," was the astonished reply. "Why, that is more than all the candidates together ever get in New Jersey. A hundred and—— good heavens, sir, how many votes does it take to elect a man in New York?"

The redness of Mr. Seward's hair was taken up and commented upon by some of his newspaper friends, who set forth in a most elaborate way that Esau, Cato, Clovis, William Rufus, and others of a lofty race of red-haired heroes, resembled Seward in this highly important respect; while others showed how many of the greatest names in history were achieved in youth. In those days of ferment parties rose and fell on what would now be considered very slight issues.

Perhaps the most momentous crisis in the political history of New York was that brought on by the Anti-Masonic movement in 1828–9. In September, 1826, William Morgan, an inhabitant of Batavia, in the county of Genesee, was arrested on the charge of petty larceny and was conveyed to the common jail in the county of Ontario, Canandaigua. He was taken from jail by citizens of Canandaigua, put in a closed carriage and clandestinely driven to Lockport, and thence to Fort Niagara, on the banks of the Niagara River. There for a time all trace of him disappeared. The story goes that he was taken from Fort Niagara and in some way summarily put to death. The explanation of this curious transaction was that he was a Freemason who had conceived the notion of making public the

secrets of the order; that he had prepared a book which was then in type in a printing-office in Batavia, and was about to be published. The printing-office was forcibly attacked and burned down in the night to destroy the partly prepared book, and it was charged that this outrage and the supposed murder of Morgan were the work of the Freemasons. An intense excitement broke out in the counties west of Cayuga Lake, and in due time spread throughout the State, and even into other portions of the Northern States. The presidential election of 1828 was coming on and the Anti-Masonic party grew to be an important political factor. It was during this tremendous Anti-Masonic excitement that a political phrase, since well known, came into use. A body, said to be that of William Morgan, had been found in the Niagara River. It was never thoroughly identified, but Thurlow Weed, Mr. Seward's closest political friend and ally, was said to have declared that "it was a good-enough Morgan until after election."

Curiously enough, the Anti-Masonic excitement assumed proportions big enough to carry it into a national canvass, and in 1831 Mr. Seward, visiting Massachusetts, thought it worth while to have an interview with John Quincy Adams on the subject of re-entering public life as the national candidate of the Anti-Masons. Mr. Seward describes John Quincy Adams as "a short, rather corpulent man, of sixty and upward. He was bald; his countenance was staid, sober almost to gloom or sorrow, and hardly gave an in-

dication of his superiority over other men. His eyes were weak and inflamed. He was dressed in an olive frock-coat, and cravat carelessly tied, and an old-fashioned light-colored vest and pantaloons. It was obvious that he was a student just called from the labors of his closet." To this minute description, which indicates Seward's habit of close observation, is added this comment: "As I left the house, I thought I could plainly answer how it happened that he, the best Presi-

Mr. Seward's Home at Auburn, N. Y.

dent since Washington, entered and left the office with so few devoted personal friends." Years afterward, Seward wrote a biography of John Quincy Adams, which to-day stands among the very best personal histories ever written by an American.

As I have said, Seward early imbibed ideas hostile to slavery, and he took an active part in forming those advance columns of the friends of human liberty which finally swept the Northern States. He was a second time a candidate for

Governor of New York, in 1838, and was elected over Marcy by a handsome majority. During his candidacy he was again assailed for the redness of his hair and his extreme youth, and it was in vain pleaded that he was four years older than when he had before been a candidate. Another charge against him was in reference to transactions with the Holland Land Company and their tenants, who were in possession of certain wild lands in Chautauqua County; but a more important issue in the campaign was raised by the Anti-Slavery Society, which propounded to the candidates in nomination three questions: First. In regard to granting fugitive slaves trial by jury. Second. In regard to abolishing distinctions and constitutional rights founded solely on complexion. Third. In regard to the repeal of the law which authorized the importation of slaves into New York and their detention as such during a period of nine months. In a calm reply, Seward, while avowing his firm faith in trial by jury, and saying that the more humble the individual the stronger is his claim to its protection, and declaring his opposition in clear and definite terms to all human bondage, refused to make any ante-election pledges as to his action upon specific measures. He declared that these must actually come before him for his decision. The greater part of the followers of the Anti-Slavery leaders were satisfied with these answers, although the leaders themselves were not.

Seward's election was hailed with the wildest

enthusiasm by the New York Whigs, and his inauguration and administration were regarded as matters of the highest political importance. During his administration of the governorship a controversy arose between him and the Governor of Virginia regarding the return of three sailors who were charged with the crime of aiding a slave, who secreted himself on board their vessel, to escape from bondage. Governor Seward took high ground in his reply. The laws of the State of New York, he said, did not recognize property in man, and to aid a person therefore to escape from slavery was not a crime. His exposition of natural law and of the law of slavery was masterly and unanswerable, and in the long controversy that followed, Virginia was finally driven to the extreme of threatening to dissolve the Union. The Virginia Governor appealed to other States, and finally in great wrath resigned his office. The Virginia legislature passed an act requiring that all New York vessels in ports of Virginia should be searched before they were permitted to sail, for slaves that might be secreted on board. A similar controversy arose between New York and Georgia during Governor Seward's administration, with a similar result. In all these cases Governor Seward maintained an attitude of calm, courteous, but immovable opposition to the claims of slavery. This position he steadily maintained through all his public career. While he was Governor he proposed to extend the right of suffrage to the negroes of New York,

slavery having in the meantime been abolished, and this with other public utterances placed him

The Garden at Auburn.

among the foremost opponents of slavery within the Whig party.

As Governor of New York, Seward advocated and carried through a just and liberal policy. During his administration imprison-

ment for debt was abolished, the cause of general education was advanced, internal improvements were made, and foreign immigration fostered.

Elected to the United States Senate in 1849, he early took occasion to declare his sentiments on the then dominant topic — slavery. In a speech on March 11, 1850, the admission of California being under consideration, he said that there was "a higher law than the Constitution which regulated the authority of Congress over the national domain—the law of God and the interests of humanity." This phrase was denounced by the defenders of slavery as treasonable. Eight years later, in a speech delivered at Rochester, N. Y., he referred to the "irrepressible conflict" then going on, which could only end in the United States becoming either entirely a slaveholding or non-slaveholding nation. These two phrases clung to Seward all through his public career, and will long be associated with his name. Seward's habit of mind, however, was not combative, and, with his habitually gentle disposition, he avoided all unnecessary controversy. Even when he was Secretary of State in Lincoln's administration, his habit of looking on the bright side of things was thought by many to be one of the causes of the slowness with which the war was prosecuted. He believed that Providence would deal with slavery as it dealt with other things, which came to an end in the course of time without confusion and without violence; and he persuaded himself that the war, when it did come, was nothing more than a temporary

disturbance. It was even said of him, and not denied, that he was in favor, as Secretary of State, of diverting the nation from the great issue before it by provoking a foreign war; but there never was any question as to Seward's lofty patriotism, and his sincere devotion to the cause of human freedom and the rights of man.

When the Republican party, in 1860, had arrived at a point where there was a possibility that it might triumph on account of the divisions in the Democratic party, Seward was the most prominent candidate for the Presidential nomination. The convention met in Chicago amidst the greatest excitement. By many the nomination of Seward was thought a foregone conclusion. He was the leading Republican of the Eastern States, well known for his learning, eminent legal ability, and, above all, for the pure and honest administration of his high office as Governor of the State of New York. No other name but his so evoked the enthusiasm of the masses of the people of the States east of the great lakes, and intense was the surprise of hundreds of thousands of persons when the comparatively unknown prairie lawyer and rail-splitter, Abraham Lincoln, was nominated in place of the statesman, William H. Seward.

Looking back upon these stirring historic events, it now seems as though an overruling Providence had so contrived matters, apparently in the hands of men, that another man, trained in a rougher and harder school than Seward, should be elected to furnish the excuse for the

Southern revolt and lead the nation through fire and blood to human freedom.

By a curious combination of circumstances, some of the most conspicuous rivals of Lincoln in the race for the Presidential nomination were taken into his cabinet. Edward Bates, of Missouri, who was one of these, was made Attorney-General, and William H. Seward, by common consent, was regarded as the only person to whom to entrust the portfolio of the Secretary of State. It is very likely that Seward, with his long training, his charming habit of self-complacency, and his knowledge of men and affairs, regarded himself as likely to be the real interior spirit of the Lincoln administration. With this view he outlined a presidential inaugural address and defined a policy for the new administration to follow. It is hardly necessary to say that Lincoln was the absolute President and master of the situation, and that Seward, who was wise and shrewd, very soon learned to take the measure of the new man from the West and to accept his own position, the duties of which he discharged with wonderful ability, and with a certain graciousness of manner that has never been excelled by any statesman in that place.

His conduct of the foreign affairs of the Republic during the trying times of the civil war was in every respect masterly, patriotic, and calculated to win, as it did, the respect and admiration of the civilized world. The affair of the Trent was one of the incidents of his administration which at one time threatened to draw us

into war with England, while we were yet endeavoring to put down a gigantic rebellion at home. Captain Wilkes, of the United States ship San Jacinto, had taken from the British passenger steamer Trent two rebel commissioners on their way to England—Messrs. Mason and Slidell. Their return was demanded by the British Government, and for a time it seemed as though the United States Government must either submit to a gross humiliation in surrender or go to war, either of which was to be profoundly deplored. Secretary Seward, by referring this question to an unsettled and vexatious dispute with England, which had been raised during the war of 1812, contrived to extricate the United States Government from a most baffling dilemma, and to save at once the honor and the credit of the nation. The rebel commissioners were restored to the British flag.

As a lawyer, Seward distinguished himself by befriending the poor and needy, the friendless and the stranger. His chivalrous love of fair play was aroused whenever he heard the cry of the enslaved or the oppressed. He defended persons who were accused of having aided in the escape of fugitive slaves, and in many ways manifested his sympathy with those who were in distress and apparently under the ban of the law. Here are two or three extracts from his occasional addresses that may be taken as his points of doctrine:

"If all the internal improvements required to cross this State were to be made at once, the

debt which would be created would not impair the public credit or retard the public prosperity a single year. The expenses of a single year of war would exceed the whole sum of such cost."

"Wealth and prosperity have always served as the guides which introduced vice, luxury, and corruption into republics; and luxury, vice, and corruption have subverted every republic which has preceded us that had force enough in its incorrupted state to resist foreign invasion."

"The perpetuity of this Union is, and ought to be, the object of the most persevering and watchful solicitude on the part of every American citizen."

In 1865, when President Lincoln was assassinated in the city of Washington, the band of conspirators who had planned the murder of the President had also included Seward and some other members of the cabinet in their deadly scheme. One of the assassins, swiftly and unexpectedly gaining entrance at the street door, mounted to the chamber where Seward was lying ill in his bed. The conspirator, armed with a knife, threw himself upon the sick man and stabbed him in several places, but was prevented from instantly killing him by the attendant, a male nurse. While the attendant and the assassin were struggling together, Seward craftily rolled himself over and fell between the bed and the wall, and before the wretch could go further, help came and Seward's life was saved. For days he lingered between living and dying, his face so gashed with the assassin's knife that it was with

The Seward Statue, by Randolph Rogers, in Madison Square, New York.

difficulty that he could be fed. After many days of pain and confinement he was permitted to be bolstered up in bed and look out upon the summer sky. Fearing the effect that the news would have upon the enfeebled invalid, Seward had not been told of the details of the conspiracy nor of the death of Lincoln; but as his eyes sought out the familiar objects from the window

of his sick-room, he saw the flag on the White House at half-mast. Instantly divining all that had happened, he said: "The President is dead," and relapsed into silence, while the tears coursed down his scarred and wounded face.

During Johnson's administration Seward was able to resume his place in the State Department, and, greatly to the disappointment of some of his friends, he supported the policy of the President, which was somewhat at variance with that of Lincoln. Many of his friends fell away from him, and he doubtless endured in silence and in sorrow the obloquy to which he was exposed by reason of his willingness to administer the affairs of the State Department during the administration of a man whose policy was highly objectionable to the party that had elected Lincoln, and to which Seward had so long been faithful.

An important incident of Seward's service in the State Department during Andrew Johnson's administration was the purchase of Alaska from Russia by the United States Government, a transaction which Seward conducted with great skill and diplomatic ability. His name should be forever associated with that surprising state stroke.

On his retirement from the State Department Seward undertook a journey around the world, accompanied by members of his family. It was a unique and wonderful journey, occupying more than a year. Everywhere the aged statesman was received with the most impressive demonstrations of respect and veneration. In foreign lands, where one would scarcely expect

the name of an American to have penetrated, he was greeted with a certain impressiveness that was a wonderful tribute to his fame and to his prominence. On his return to Auburn he said, in a little speech to his neighbors who greeted him at his own house: "In the course of my wanderings I have seen, not all the nations, but some of the nations of every race of the earth. I have looked the whole human family in the face, and taken by the hand and conversed with my fellow-man in his lowest degradation and in his highest state of civilization. I found no nation so distant and no race so low that the character of an American citizen did not secure to me, not merely safety, but also respect, consideration, and affection." This was in October, 1871. In October of the next year he died.

In the early part of his career, in 1846, he defended and secured a fair trial for a negro accused of murder, one Freeman. The man was a half-witted creature, apparently incapable of any appeal to his reason or to his intelligence, and at one time there was every probability that he would be lynched; but Seward resolved to give him the benefit of all his talents in order that he should be fairly tried by a competent court of justice. The man was deaf, deserted, ignorant, and his conduct inexplicable on any principle of sanity. Referring to this tragical incident, Seward wrote of his proposed defence of Freeman: "This will raise a storm of prejudice and passion which will try the fortitude of my friends, but I shall do my duty; I care

not whether I am ever to be forgiven for it or not." Closing his argument on the trial, Seward said: "In due time, gentlemen of the jury, when I shall have paid the debt of nature, my remains will rest here in your midst with those of my kindred and neighbors. It is very possible they may be unhonored, neglected, spurned; but perhaps later, when the passion and excitement which now agitate this community shall have passed away, some wandering stranger, some lone exile, some Indian, some negro, may erect over them an humble stone, and thereon this epitaph, 'He was Faithful.'" The passions and excitements which agitated the community of that time have long since passed away, and possibly even the memories of that remarkable trial have faded from the minds of men; but where Seward rests, in the embowered shades of Auburn, rises a marble monument on which is engraved the epitaph of his choice, "He was Faithful."

Salmon Portland Chase.

## VI.

## SALMON P. CHASE.

THAT is a long life which covers the years between the first appearance of a steamboat on Lake Erie and the end of the Civil War, the impeachment of Andrew Johnson and the second election of General Grant. A boy, twelve years old, born in Cornish, N. H., in 1808, and destined to be Chief-Justice of the United States and the great Finance Minister of his time, journeyed from New England to that remote and almost unknown region, "The Ohio," in 1820. He was Salmon Portland, son of Ithamar Chase, of a distinguished New England family. He was early left fatherless, and when a young lad was invited by his uncle, Philander Chase, the Protestant Episcopal Bishop of Ohio, to be received into his household at Worthington, O. Chase, in his autobiographical notes, said: "I tried to find out where I was going, and got some queer information. 'The Ohio,' as the country was then called, was a great way off. It was very fertile. Cucumbers grew on trees! There were wonderful springs whose waters were like New England rum! Deer and wolves were plenty, and people few." The lad began his journey, in charge of his elder brother Alexander, who was

going West with the intention of joining General Cass's expedition into the Indian country; and another member of the party was Henry R. Schoolcraft, who afterward became distinguished as a writer on Indian ethnology, customs, and traditions.

The little party at Black Rock, Lake Erie, were to take passage on a novel craft, the steamer "Walk-in-the-Water," for Cleveland. They were detained by reason of the ice in the lake. It was then April, 1820, and when they did finally embark, the steamer was towed part way by several yoke of oxen attached to a tow-line, walking on the bank; and when they were forced to leave the shore, the steamer was helped in her progress across the open lake by sails as well as by steam. Nevertheless this method of navigation was greatly admired for its speed and its novelty.

Arriving at Cleveland Alexander Chase and Schoolcraft left the lad behind, where he was to wait for company to take charge of him to Worthington. During his tarry here he amused himself and earned a little money by ferrying passengers across the Cuyahoga. On this incident was founded a pleasing tale written for boys by J. T. Trowbridge, and entitled "The Ferry-Boy and the Financier." Chase's brief experience on the Cuyahoga would hardly warrant any person in giving him the title of a ferry-boy, as his doings in that line were very limited. But we may be grateful to Mr. Trowbridge, the writer of the book, for his laudable endeavor, because

having written to Chase, in 1863 and 1864, for information on which to build his entertaining story, he was favored with many letters from the great man, in which may be found some autobiographical notes of great value, which probably otherwise would never have been written.

The lad was finally taken into the charge of two young men who were going to Worthington, and they went forward in company. "The settlement of the country," wrote Mr. Chase, in later years, "was only begun. Great forests stretched across the State. Carriage-ways were hardly practicable. Almost all travelling was performed on foot or on horseback. The two young men had two horses, and the arrangement was that we were to ride and tie, that is to say, one was to ride ahead some distance, then dismount and tie his horse, and walk forward. The person on foot was to come up, take the horse, ride on beyond the walker in front, then tie, and so on. We passed through Wooster, staying there overnight. This place seemed to me to be a great one, and the lighted houses, as we went in after dark, were very splendid. In three or four days we reached Worthington. I entered the town walking, and met my uncle in the street with two or three of his clergy or friends."

The young lad, now domesticated with his uncle, the Bishop of Ohio, was expected to pursue his studies, already well begun, and to "do chores." He was proficient in Latin and Greek, and "Rollin's Ancient History" was read and reread by him, as many modern boys might read

a cheap novel. "A ludicrous incident of his Worthington life," says one of his biographers, J. W. Shuckers, "fastened itself strongly in his memory. One morning the bishop and all the older members of the family went away, leaving the boy at home, with directions to kill and dress a pig for the next day's dinner." "I had no

The House in which Mr. Chase was Born, at Cornish, N. H.

great difficulty," said Mr. Chase, "in catching and slaughtering a fat young porker. A tub of hot water was in readiness for plunging him in preparatory to taking off his bristles. Unfortunately, however, the water was too hot, or perhaps when I soused the pig into it I kept him there too long. At any rate, when I undertook to remove the bristles, expecting that they would

come off almost of themselves, I found to my dismay that I could not stir one of them. In pig-killing phrase, the bristles were 'set.' I pulled and pulled in vain. What was I to do? The pig must be dressed. About that there must be no failure. I thought of my cousin's razors, a nice new pair, just suited to the use of a spruce young clergyman as he was. No sooner thought of than done. I got the razors and shaved the pig from tail to snout. I think the shaving was a success. The razors were damaged by the operation, however, but they were carefully cleaned and restored to their place. My impression is that, on the whole, the killing was not satisfactory to the bishop, and that my cousin did not find his razors exactly in condition for use the next morning. But the operation had its moral, and showed that where there is a will there is a way." This humble and grotesque experience in young Chase's life may very fairly be taken as an indication of the stuff that was in him. His will was indomitable, and whatever he set out to do, from that day until the day he laid down his life, was done.

Those were hard times in "The Ohio." "Prices of all provisions were low. Corn was ten and even six cents a bushel, the purchaser himself gathering it in the field. Twenty-five cents would buy a bushel of wheat, good and in good order. There were no good roads, no accessible markets, no revenue, and salaries were small. I have heard the bishop say that his whole money income as bishop did not pay his postage

bills. It took a bushel of wheat to pay for the conveyance of a letter over one hundred and sixty miles." So when the good bishop was offered the presidency of Cincinnati College, in 1822, he accepted the place as offering a means of deliverance from his hard and unprofitable post at the head of the diocese.

Salmon P. Chase entered the college as a freshman, but by extra study was very soon promoted to the sophomore class, in which he distinguished himself by his industry and application. His first public exercise was a year earlier, when he delivered an original Greek oration. "My subject," he says, "was Paul and John compared, Paul being the principal figure. What trouble I had to turn my English thoughts into Greek forms! The subject helped me, however, for it allowed me to take sentences from the Testament and thus abridge my labors!" The orator was highly successful, generously applauded, and received the commendation of his uncle, the bishop.

While sophomore in Cincinnati College a mischievous student set fire to one of the desks. Great was the consternation, and when the fire had been put out the tutor began, with the students ranged in the class, with, "Sophomore ——, did you set fire to the desk?" "No, sir." "Do you know who did?" "No, sir." He reached the culprit. "Did you set fire to the desk?" Nothing abashed, his answer was, "No, sir." "Do you know who did?" "No, sir." Says Chase: "I saw I had to pass the ordeal, and determined to

The Chase Home at Keene, N. H.—Monadnock in the Background.

tell the truth, but not to give the name of my classmate, which I thought would be about as mean as to tell a lie would be wrong. The question came. 'Sophomore Chase, did you set fire to the desk?' 'No, sir.' 'Do you know who did?' 'Yes, sir.' 'Who was it?' 'I shall not tell you, sir.' He said no more. The case went before the faculty, and I heard was the subject of some discussion, but it was not thought worth while to prosecute the inquiry."

The hard times grew harder, and even the college was obliged finally to suspend operations for the time, and Bishop Chase went to England to raise means to establish a theological school. Young Chase returned to New England, where his loving and zealous mother thought that she could spare enough from her scanty store, added to whatever sums he might earn for himself meanwhile, to carry him through Dartmouth College. "How little I appreciated her sacrifices," he says, "and it is sad to think, and tears fill my eyes as I do think, how late comes true appreciation of them. Alas! how inadequately, until the beloved mother who made them has gone beyond the reach of its manifestation."

Not long after his entry into Dartmouth College he met with another characteristic event, and also important as indicating the ruggedness of his character. Some difficulty occurred, in which a friend of his, one George Punchard, a warm-hearted and generous fellow, was involved. Chase had nothing to do with

the affair, but took Punchard's part cordially, because he believed him to be unjustly censured. The faculty took the matter in hand and Punchard was suspended. Chase waited upon the President and remonstrated, but the President intimated that the faculty was the proper judge of that question, and had decided. Chase said: "Then I desire to leave the college also, for I do not wish to stay where a student is liable to such injustice." "Had I consulted my mother?" "No, but I wanted leave of absence for a few days that I might do so." "You cannot have it," said the President. "Then, sir," said Chase, very respectfully, "I must go without it." "He saw my determination, and I think really respected the motive which prompted it. At any rate, he at last consented to the leave." The young man's mother welcomed him, but while she could not approve, she did not censure him harshly for his course. Many years afterward he said: "I could not help feeling that I had done right in standing by my friend, though I was sorry I had been obliged to leave college." He eventually, however, returned to college and graduated with credit, though without special distinction.

Leaving college after graduation, he made his way to Washington, D. C., by slow and economical stages, and there boldly proclaimed, through the advertising columns of the *National Intelligencer*, his intention to open, in the western part of the city, a select classical school, the special advantages of which were set forth

with some minuteness, and the number of his pupils was discreetly limited to twenty; beyond that he could not go. He waited patiently and hopefully for the coming of the twenty pupils. One only was brought forward to register his name—Columbus Bonfils; but, alas! Columbus Bonfils was the first and last pupil; the other nineteen never made their appearance. Like many another young fellow cast adrift in Washington, he bethought him of obtaining a government clerkship. His uncle, Dudley Chase, was a Senator from Vermont and an influential friend and supporter of John Quincy Adams, then President. Young Chase accordingly waited upon the great man at his lodgings, told the story of his unsuccessful efforts, and besought his aid in securing a clerkship. The Senator replied: "I once procured an office for a nephew of mine and he was ruined by it. I then determined I never would ask for another. I will lend you fifty cents with which to buy a spade, but I cannot help you to a clerkship." But Providence raised up friends for the plucky young man, and having relinquished his class of one, he was invited to take charge of the boys' department of "Mr. Plumley's Select Classical Seminary." This institution contained eighteen or twenty scholars, among whom was Salmon P. Chase's class of one, Columbus Bonfils. Among other of the pupils of this academy were sons of Henry Clay and William Wirt, the latter then Attorney-General.

In September, 1827, Chase, steadily keeping

in view his intention to study the law, entered the office of Attorney-General Wirt, then in the splendid maturity of his powers, and began his labors as a student. But while he was zealously and laboriously making his way in the world against obstacles about which young men of the present day can know very little, he did not forget his principles as a friend of human freedom. These had early been instilled into his very being by his devoted mother and his uncle, the bishop. In 1828 we find his name attached to a petition to Congress praying for the abolition of slavery and the slave-trade in the District of Columbia; and there probably was no opportunity offered him to express his opinions on the great subject of human liberty, then beginning to agitate all the people, that he did not readily embrace. He looked into the Capitol from time to time and listened to the debates of Congress, which did not impress him favorably with the order and dignity of legislative proceedings there.

In one of his letters to Mr. Trowbridge he says: "I became slightly acquainted with a number of prominent characters, but was too diffident to push myself into notice, possibly too proud to ask for recognition, and preferring to wait for it; too indifferent, also (a more serious fault), to what transpired around me to take much pains to acquaint myself with the histories and men of the hour. I made much too little use of the advantages which a residence in Washington at that period afforded. I was poor and sensitive,

a young teacher, needing myself to be taught and guided." But having been admitted to the bar, Chase boldly said: "I would rather be first twenty years hence at Cincinnati than at Baltimore. As I ever have been first at school and college, except at Dartmouth, where I was much too idle, I shall ever strive to be first wherever I may be, let what success will attend the effort." These were the words of a brave young spirit, resolved to turn again to the raw but promising life of the West. To Cincinnati, then, he went in March, 1830, was admitted to the bar soon after, and began a lawyer's life.

He was a prodigious worker, and up to his latest days, which were undoubtedly shortened by his arduous and unceasing mental labors, he spared himself not for a day, not for an hour, but devoted himself with unremitting toil to the accumulation of the knowledge that seemed to him necessary in the vocation of life immediately before him. Very soon after his arrival in Cincinnati he undertook and carried out a work of great magnitude and importance, a new edition of the statutes of Ohio. The codification of a vast body of laws, dating from 1788 to 1833, inclusive, a period of forty-six years, was the herculean task which he calmly assumed and executed while yet scarcely twenty-two years of age. The book is to this day a work of standard value.

Those were times when fugitive slaves, escaping from the soil of Kentucky to the free soil of Ohio, filled the whole Northwestern country

with a vague feeling of trouble. Men were beginning to discuss the righteousness of human slavery and question the justice of returning to bondage those who had escaped from communities in which slavery was recognized as a legal and humane institution. In July, 1836, there occurred in Cincinnati an incident known in history as the "Birney Mob," which undoubtedly had much to do with coloring the political views of Chase. James G. Birney was a Southern slaveholder, who, having emancipated his human chattels, went to Cincinnati and established an anti-slavery newspaper called *The Philanthropist*. The sentiment of the city was pro-slavery, and the appearance of the newspaper so angered the people that the office was mobbed, the type thrown into the street and the press into the river. Chase viewed these lawless and outrageous proceedings with deep indignation, and the circumstances of the Birney mob made an impression upon his mind so deep that he resolved that he would make a study of the whole question with a view to forming some opinion as to the proper method of dealing with it. In one of his letters to Mr. Trowbridge he says: "Since 1828 I had retained a profound sense of the general wrong and evil of slave-holding, but I thought the denunciations of slave-holders by abolition writers too sweeping and unjust, and I was not prepared for any political action against slavery."

Several other fugitive slave cases followed in rapid succession, some of them being of a most

heartrending and desperate character. One of the most noted of these was the Van Zandt case, in which an honest and well-meaning farmer who had succored nine fugitive slaves was concerned. The fugitives were sought to be wrested from the custody of Van Zandt by two volunteer ruffians who did not pretend to have any authority of law. In the legal fracas which followed, Chase became involved as counsel for the defendant, Van Zandt. The case went from court to court, and finally was appealed to the United States Supreme Court, where Chase appeared before the tribunal of last resort associated with William H. Seward. Chase's argument before the United States Supreme Court has passed into history as one of the boldest and most powerful pleas for human liberty under the Constitution of the United States ever made by any lawyer. Of Mr. Seward's assistance in this matter Chase wrote: "I regard him as one of the very first public men of our country. Who but himself would have done what he did for the poor wretch Freeman? His course in the Van Zandt case has been generous and noble, but his action in the Freeman case, considering his own personal position and the circumstances, was magnanimous in the highest degree!"

Chase at this time was known as the "Attorney-General for negroes;" but when he had occasion to go into the slave-holding ground of Kentucky, across the river from Cincinnati, as he often did, he was invariably treated with marked respect and cordiality. Even the slave-holders

paid tribute to his inflexible sense of justice and his dignified resolution to do what he conceived to be his whole duty by his fellow-men.

The Liberty party, in 1845, began to show its head. The call for its first convention in Ohio was written by Salmon P. Chase and bore his signature among others. He had generally been identified with the Democratic party, and in later years, although his continuance with that party was neither intimate nor long, men were accustomed to refer to him as having been early affiliated with the Democracy. In an address made in February, 1845, he said: "True democracy makes no inquiry about the color of the skin or the place of nativity, or any similar circumstance or condition. Wherever it sees a man it recognizes a being endowed by his Creator with original unalienable rights. In communities of men it recognizes no distinctions founded on mere arbitrary will. I regard, therefore, the exclusion of the colored people as a body from the elective franchise as incompatible with true democratic principles." This utterance in later years returned to plague the speaker; but to his everlasting honor be it said, he never for an instant deviated from the fundamental principle here laid down.

Ohio Democrats were earlier impregnated with the idea that human slavery was wrong and must pass away than were their brethren in some of the Middle and Eastern States. It was comparatively easy, therefore, in 1849, to form a coalition by which Salmon P. Chase

should be elected to the United States Senate. As in Sumner's case in Massachusetts, later on, it was a coalition of Free-Soilers and Democrats against the Hunkers and Whigs. Mr. Chase declared his intention to act with the Independent Democrats in all State issues so long as they stood by the principles which were the basis of the coalition. It may be said here that he was twice elected for Governor and twice for Senator, and one of the important results of the upheaval which had made his election possible was a repeal of the infamous Black Laws of the State. These laws required colored people to give bonds for good behavior as a condition of residence in the State, excluded them from the schools, denied them the right of testifying in the courts when a white man was party on either side, and subjected them to various other unjust and degrading disabilities. With one exception (the right to sit on juries) these laws were swept from the statute-book.

In the Senate, into which Chase now made his entry, the contest was over the proposition to open to slavery the whole of the vast territory acquired by the annexation of Texas, the Gadsden purchase, and the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. The people of California had already framed a form of government for themselves, excluding slavery, and now awaited Federal action. It is not necessary now to dwell upon the long debate that ensued, but it must be said that Senator Chase's arguments, when he ventured into the discussion, at once commanded

attention and respect. His remarks were never greatly extended. They were always concise and to the point. For example, when Daniel Webster proposed that physical law excluded slavery from a portion of the new territory, Senator Chase asked: "Is it true that any law of physical geography will protect the new Territories from the curse of slavery? Peonism was there under the Mexican law, and if peonism were not there to warn us, what may be expected if slavery be not prohibited?"

In the debate over the Fugitive Slave law, he pleaded earnestly for some amelioration of the iron statute which the slaveholders insisted upon forcing upon the country. The right of trial by jury, he urged, ought at least to be embodied into the law. "If the most ordinary controversy," he said, "involving a contested claim to $20, must be decided by a jury, surely a controversy which involves the right of a man to his liberty should have a similar trial."

The repeal of the Missouri Compromise by the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill was another opportunity which Chase readily embraced to disclose his immovable position on the general subject of human rights. He pleaded only that the people of the Territories, acting through their proper representatives in the Territorial Legislature and subject to the limitations of the Constitution, should be able to protect themselves against slavery by prohibiting it. This principle was steadfastly denied by the pro-slavery Senators. When the battle was won for

Edgewood House, Mr. Chase's Residence at Washington, D. C.

the pro-slavery cause, great was the jubilation of the people who had for weeks crowded the galleries and lobbies of the Capitol waiting for the determination of the question. It was dark in the early morning of March 4, 1854, after a session of seventeen hours, when the bill finally passed the Senate. Senators Chase and Sumner walked down the steps of the Capitol together. The thunder of a cannon's salute by the victorious slave-owners fell upon their ears. Said Chase: "They celebrate a present victory, but the echoes that they awake will never rest until slavery itself shall die."

Nominated for Governor of Ohio by the Republican party in 1855, Chase stumped the State, making a series of vigorous and effective speeches. During his term of office the State was repeatedly torn with dissensions over questions raised by the attempt to return fugitive slaves. It is noticeable, however, that public opinion, since his first activity in the Van Zandt and similar cases, had greatly changed for the better. It was now thought necessary to apologize for any attempt on the part of the United States authorities and their sympathizers to execute the infamous and generally unpopular law regarding fugitive slaves. Some of these cases were of a peculiarly distressing character, the celebrated case of Margaret Garner being one. This was a peculiarly horrible affair, a fugitive slave-mother undertaking to kill her offspring rather than see them remanded again to bondage. And it is possible that the tragicalness of

this dreadful business, and the bloody heroism of the slave mother, did much to stir the conscience of people who had been disposed to apologize and defend the peculiar institution.

Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that the stalwart and indomitable Republican Senator from Ohio should develop an ambition for the Presidential nomination of his party. It is not certain that he aided materially in any of the plans of his Ohio friends, which had for their purpose his nomination in 1860, by the National Republican Convention at Chicago; but the delegation from his State was not united, and although his name was presented and figured somewhat conspicuously in the list of candidates before the balloting, he did not cut a great figure in the convention. Abraham Lincoln was nominated and elected. Very early in January following Chase was invited to meet Lincoln in Springfield. The President-elect cordially greeted him, and said: "I have done with you what I would not perhaps have ventured to do with any other man in the country—sent for you to ask you whether you will accept the appointment of Secretary of the Treasury, without, however, being exactly prepared to offer it to you." To this somewhat embarrassing proposition Chase replied that he was in an unpleasant position. He wanted no appointment, and certainly could hardly reconcile himself to the acceptance of a subordinate place. Lincoln told him that he felt bound to offer the first place to Seward, who, it will be remembered, was Lin-

coln's chief opponent in the contest for the Presidental nomination. Finally, however, soon after Lincoln's arrival in Washington, Chase was nominated and confirmed by the Senate, much to his surprise, no word having passed between the President-elect and himself meanwhile.

It was as the great Finance Minister of the civil war that Chase's real genius was set to work and his proudest laurels were won. The condition of the Treasury when he took charge was deplorable. The public finances were greatly depressed; Congress had been rent by stormy factions, and a powerful body of the Northern people protested passionately against the existence of any power on the part of the General Government to coerce the so-called seceding States. Chase's biographer, Mr. Shuckers, says of him: "His abilities and energies soon manifested themselves to the people. He re-established the public credit upon solid foundations. He created a currency which answered all the vast requirements of the war, and was beyond all precedent in the history of the country popular among the people, and this, too, before the suspension of cash payments. It is important to be remembered that that currency was not at first a legal tender. He projected a system of national banks designed ultimately to supersede all similar institutions existing under State laws. The circulating notes of these banks, secured both by private capital and by ample deposits of government bonds in the Treasury of

the United States, were intended to provide in an emphatic sense a sound and uniform currency, the benefits of which (embracing the whole country and extending into the far future) were to prevent the evils inseparable from disordered issues. Under the general operation of his measures the loans of the government were absorbed with great rapidity, not only by domestic purchasers, but by foreign investors, and more important than any other consideration, the administration was enabled to meet the prodigious expenditures entailed by the war, promptly, surely, regularly."

Webster said of Alexander Hamilton: "He smote the rock of the national resources and abundant streams of revenue gushed forth." How truly this may be said of Chase we may gather from Blaine's comment in his "Twenty Years of Congress," on the system of internal revenue planned and put into operation by Secretary Chase: "Congress rendered the taxes more palatable and less oppressive to the producers by largely increasing the duties on imports by the tariff act of July 14, 1862, thus shutting out still more conclusively all competition from foreign fabrics. The increased cost was charged to the consumer, and taxes of fabulous amounts were paid promptly and with apparent cheerfulness by the people. The internal revenue was bounteous from the first, and in a short period increased to $1,000,000 per day for every secular day of the year. The amount paid on incomes for a single year reached $65,000,000, the lead-

ing merchant in New York paying in one check a tax of $400,000 on an income of $4,000,000. . . . It was the crowning glory of Secretary Chase's policy, and its scope and boldness entitle him to rank with the great financiers of the world."

Nor were the operations of Chase's broad and comprehensive mind confined to the finances of the government. He was consulted in the conduct of the war at almost every step, and where Secretary Seward was deemed hesitating and conservative, Secretary Chase was always bold, aggressive, and progressive. He assisted in the early formation of the army of volunteers, a duty in which his active and thoughtful measures to promote the efficiency of the Ohio militia admirably fitted him. We are told that Chase during this period often lamented that he had not himself in early life turned his thoughts to the study of military strategy. He had in him many of the qualities that make a great soldier. He never lost his mental balance or self-possession; in moments of the greatest exterior excitement, he was thoughtful, collected, and calm. Horace Greeley once impetuously declared at a breakfast-table in Washington, during one of the dark periods of the war: "Why does not President Lincoln make Governor Chase commander of the Army of the Potomac? If he had been, the war would have ended in eighteen months."

When we reflect that Mr. Chase at one time in his life seriously thought of taking holy orders,

but did become a politician and a financier, his regret that he had not been a soldier may seem somewhat grotesque to one who does not know how the stress and the strain of the civil war compelled many a man to wish that he too were a strategist and a soldier. In one of his letters to Mr. Trowbridge, before referred to, Chase said: "While he was Secretary of War General Cameron conferred much with me. I never undertook to do anything in his department except when asked to give my help, and then I gave it willingly. In addition to Western border State matters, the principal subjects between General Cameron and myself were slavery and the employment of colored troops. We agreed very early that the necessity of arming them was inevitable, but we were alone in that opinion. At least no other member of the administration gave open support, while the President and Mr. Blair at least were decidedly averse to it." And yet the time came when the employment of colored troops in the suppression of the rebellion was not only accepted as a necessity, but was eagerly demanded and approved by all the loyal people of the North.

Chase's resignation of the office of Secretary of the Treasury, in June, 1864, was the result of a series of misunderstandings or disagreements between himself and President Lincoln in relation to Federal appointments. It must be admitted that Chase's selections for office were not always wise. Possibly they were in some instances better than those of the President, but he insisted

with most autocratic vehemence that he should be sole in authority in all matters pertaining to the patronage of his high office, and while the President often did defer to the Secretary's will when it clashed with his own, there seems to have been no time when the Secretary deferred to the President's will when it interfered with his; or if he did, it was with ill grace, and after several such disagreements Secretary Chase abruptly left the Cabinet. His well-known ambition to be President was very naturally revived by the insidious flatterers who thronged about him as soon as it was known that he had definitely quitted Lincoln's Cabinet with something like a personal quarrel with the President. Many politicians who had become dissatisfied with Lincoln's policy, whether justly or unjustly, thought they saw in the towering figure of the ex-Secretary of the Treasury an opportunity to divide the party and to lead the more radical elements to victory through his candidacy. The nomination for the new Presidential term was about coming on, and some of the ill-advised friends of the ex-Secretary put forth frantic efforts to secure his nomination. Among other devices, a so-called secret circular was put out by Senator Pomeroy, of Kansas, and others. Commenting on this ill-starred venture of the anti-Lincoln Republicans, Blaine says: "These various elements of discontent and opposition clustered about Secretary Chase and found in him their natural leader. He was the head of the radical forces in the Cabinet, as Mr. Seward

was the exponent of the conservative policy. He had been one of the earliest and most zealous chiefs of the Free Soil party, and ranked among the brightest stars in that small galaxy of anti-slavery Senators who bore so memorable a part in the Congressional struggles before the war. He was justly distinguished as a political leader and an able and a versatile statesman. For the part he was now desired and expected to play he had a decided inclination and not a few advantages. Keenly ambitious, he was justified by his talents, however mistaken his time and his methods, in aspiring to the highest place."

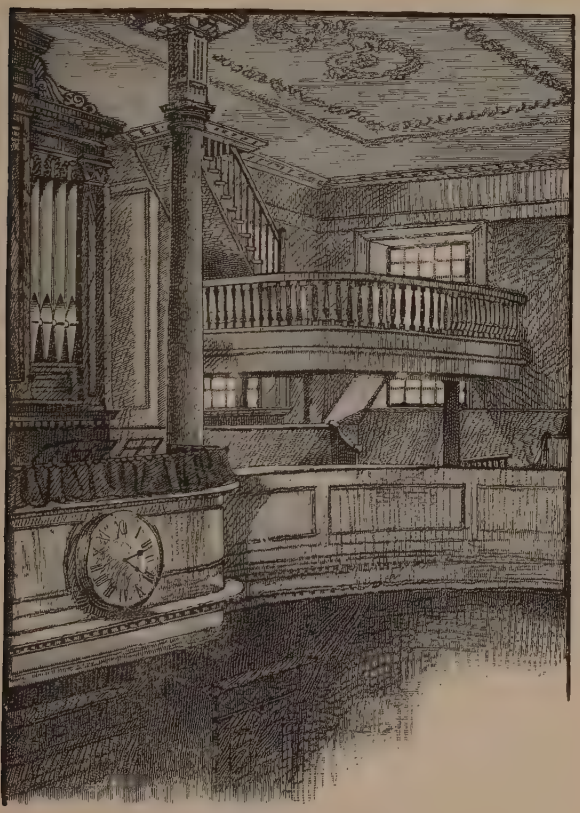
Chase had all along clung to the proposition that no President should have a second term of office, and he had added the opinion that a man of different qualities from those of Lincoln would be needed for the next four years succeeding his first term. A few days after the appearance of the so-called secret circular of Pomeroy, the Republican members of the Ohio Legislature passed a resolution in favor of Lincoln's renomination, upon which Chase withdrew his name as a candidate. It may be said that the opposition to Lincoln's renomination practically ended then and there, although it still showed itself in fitful bursts of restlessness before his renomination at Baltimore, in the summer of 1864.

Later in that year, Roger B. Taney, that ex-Secretary of the Treasury who had been rewarded with the great office of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States by An-

Mr. Chase's Desk in the Library at Edgewood House.

drew Jackson, for his subserviency in the matter of removing the public deposits from the United States bank, died. By a curious coincidence, another ex-Secretary of the Treasury, but far more renowned, honest, and pure, was nominated to take his place. While the office remained unfilled, there was great concern throughout the country over the possible action of President Lincoln. Sumner and many other advanced Republicans besought Lincoln to nominate Chase; but, on the other hand, the President was overwhelmed with expostulations from his own friends, who besought him to remember that the man whose nomination seemed imminent had been his rival in the preceding canvass for the Presidential nomination, and to withhold from him this high honor. One day during the pendency of this doubt I had occasion to see the President in his private office. He was in gay humor, and asked what was the news. I said: "Mr. President, there is no news." "Very well," he said; "what are people talking about?" "They are guessing who will be Taney's successor," I said, jocularly. Instantly his countenance fell, and, with a grave and serious expression, he said, pointing to a huge pile of telegrams and letters on his table: "I have been all day and yesterday and the day before besieged by messages from my friends all over the country, as if there were a determination to put up the bars between Governor Chase and myself." Then, after a pause, he added: "But I shall nominate him for Chief Justice neverthe-

less." Chase's nomination was sent in to the Senate December 6th, in a message written in Lin-



The Negro-Pew. [An Actual View.]

coln's own hand. His confirmation was immediate, and in the noble place of Chief Justice the ex-Secretary, ex-Governor, and ex-Senator filled the highest expectations of his friends and

covered his enemies with confusion. He presided over the deliberations of the Senate, as required by law, when that body sat as a High Court of Impeachment, listening to the charges preferred by the House in the matter of Andrew Johnson's alleged illegal proceeding in the attempt to remove Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War. In the midst of the excitements and factional heats that circled about the Capitol, only one man seemed immovable, calm, and unimpressible. That was the Chief Justice, who in imperturbable dignity presided over the High Court. To his wisdom, his calmness, and judicial firmness that now historical tribunal owes its highest claim to the respect and gratitude of our people.

As Chief Justice, Chase's labors were arduous and excessive. He had borne a tremendous strain while he held the office of Secretary of the Treasury, during the most trying period of American history. He came to the duties of the Supreme Bench with a consciousness that his later activities had unfitted him for a judicial post, but no one could ever see that he lacked any of the qualities requisite for his duties. He overcame any obstacles that he might himself have seen by dint of the severest labor, and by studies the extent of which probably not even the members of his family fully realized. He was a good judge, an honest jurist, and a stern, severe patriot.

Undoubtedly the heavy tax upon his physical strength, great though that strength was, hast-

ened the catastrophe in which his powers were finally involved in ruin. After one or two warnings in the form of slighter shocks, he was finally laid on the bed of sickness by a severe stroke of paralysis, from which he never recovered; and he died on the 7th of May, 1873, having passed the age of seventy years.

Chase's character was grave, serious, serene. He had little or no sense of humor, and, as his biographers have said, never told a story but to spoil it. He took life seriously and with a certain severity of conscientiousness which to many seemed excessive Puritanism. He was methodical, systematic, a rigid disciplinarian, punctilious in regard to all the forms of official and social intercourse, and he exacted of every subordinate the same loyalty to duty and the same exactness of statement which he himself rendered as a matter of conscience and of habit. His personal appearance was majestic and noble. His commanding figure, six feet two inches high, was admirably proportioned. His head was massive; his face wore an impress of dignity which was sometimes awful. He lacked the magnetism of Henry Clay and the godlike majesty of Daniel Webster; but none who ever saw his towering form moving through the corridors of the Treasury Department, or clad in the robes of the Chief Justice, can ever forget the almost oracular appearance which inspired the veneration and respect of those who looked upon his figure or heard the slow, calm utterances of his voice. He was respected, even venerated,

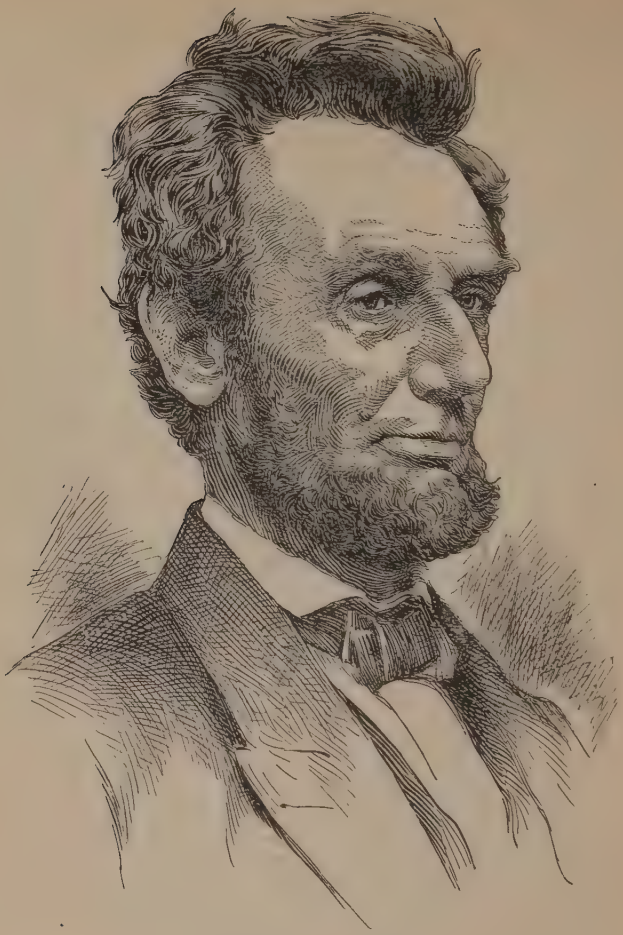
but he was never "popular" in the sense with which Americans use that word. His friends were devoted to his fortunes, but they were not reckoned as Clay and Webster reckoned theirs —by hosts. His tastes were simple, his habits domestic, and his private and public character stainless.

Demarest Lloyd, in an admirable sketch of Chase, printed in the *Atlantic Monthly* soon after the death of the Chief Justice, says: "His will was his great power. This faculty in him probably more than any other contributed to his success. It was dominating and indomitable. It yielded to no man and to no force. Its persistency was measured only by the length of the task to be accomplished, and its firmness increased with the weight of interests that depended upon it; and while it no doubt shortened his life, it again prolonged it. . . . All through these exciting and arduous periods he held himself firmly to his post. Then came the first shock that prostrated him, and first set the term beyond which he could hardly endure; at this the will turned to repair its own ravages." Of Salmon P. Chase it may be truly said that his whole life was formed upon the moral inculcated in his earliest youth—"Where there is a will there is a way."

# VII.

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

It is difficult to see how anyone who believes in God and in His watchful interest in the affairs of nations and individuals, can study the story of Abraham Lincoln and not be impressed with the idea that here was a man divinely appointed and trained for a certain work. In the earlier chapters of this book we have seen how persistently the political power of slavery in the United States asserted itself. Good and patriotic men on both sides of the question had tried to put aside slavery and all that hung on that institution, so that it should no longer appear in public affairs. Again and again they had, as they fondly thought, buried the whole matter so completely out of sight that it never would be heard of again; but, like an uneasy ghost, it continually came stalking in where it was neither expected nor desired. This could not be otherwise, in the very nature of things. Slavery was restless and aggressive. It could not be confined to the States in which it had existed for so many years unquestioned. It was not the fault of the slave-holding States that human bondage was first made lawful within their borders; and now that it was there, it could not be got rid of.



Lincoln's Approved Likeness.

This picture is after a photograph of Lincoln taken in Washington in 1862, and was given to Mr. Brooks by Mrs. Lincoln, with the remark that it was her husband's favorite likeness. When the picture, a miniature, was shown to Lincoln, and Mrs. Lincoln's remark repeated to him, he said, "I don't know that I have any favorite portrait of myself; but I have thought that if I looked like any of the likenesses of me that have been taken, I look most like that one." The picture has never before been engraved.

What was more, slavery must have an outlet. The natural increase of the slaves would soon overstock the home market. There must be some way of disposing of this increasing surplus. Nor was this all. The area of the United States was frequently being added to by the acquisition of new territory in various directions. As these new territories should enter the Union of States, unless some of them came in as slave-holding States, the non-slave-holding States would soon outnumber those in which slavery existed; and slavery needed legislation to enable itself to hold its own where it was already established. This law-making power could not be had if the free States outnumbered the slave States. Calhoun, who looked further ahead than most of the men of his time, saw that unless the newly acquired territory would be evenly divided between the slave-holding and the non-slave-holding States, the cherished institution was doomed. He worried greatly over the disturbance of the equilibrium in the Senate in favor of the non-slave-holding States, giving to these more votes in the Senate than the slave-holding States had. He died before this actually happened, but up to his latest breath he insisted that every time a new State was taken into the Union as a free State, another must be taken in as a slave State.

It was this determination to preserve "the equilibrium," of which Calhoun had so much to say, that forced the question of slavery to the surface every time we acquired territory from which new States were to be carved. As we

were constantly increasing our area in this way, slavery, anxious to secure an outlet and a market for its chattels, and equally determined to keep even the balance of power, if not inclining to its own side, made itself heard in boisterous advocacy of its claims. But the world was all the while growing more and more disposed to regard human bondage as wrong and wicked, and unless something were done to commit the whole Republic of the United States to the perpetuation of slavery as a good thing, the time would soon come when that would not only be impossible, but the bolder sort of anti-slavery men would even venture into an invasion of the right to hold slaves in States in which slavery had existed for many years without serious objection from anybody.

By dint of bullying, and by wheedling some of the Congressmen from the non-slave-holding States into their support, the representatives of the slave-holding States managed to stave off for a while the evil day when their absolute power in national affairs would be broken. Clay helped to postpone that day by compromises that gave him the name of the "Great Pacificator." Benton, a representative from a slave-holding State, failed to see the necessity of providing room for slavery to grow in; or, if he did see it, he did not care to make that provision. Webster was the awful example of a great genius blinded by a desire to keep friendly relations with a slave-holding interest which his own people at home regarded with aversion. But Calhoun never for

a moment lost sight of the fact that, unless his own people could maintain themselves against the rising tide of anti-slavery sentiment in the North and the insidious growth of free institutions in the newly acquired territories, slavery would have to fight for its own existence or would be obliged to leave the Federal Union, which would bring on another kind of a fight.

Calhoun died while this catastrophe was drawing nigh, and when the forces that made it inevitable were gathering cohesion. But the fight came at last, when the politics of the country showed that the free States were as strong as the slave States: if not a little stronger then, they would be in a clear majority before long.

Now let us look at the character and training of the man who was to be the leader of the nation during that memorable and deadly contest —Abraham Lincoln.

Many biographers lay great stress upon the condition of poverty, even squalor, into which Abraham Lincoln was born, as though that were not common to the whole Western country. It is true that Lincoln's parents were very poor. His father, Thomas Lincoln, had migrated from place to place ever since he had come to man's estate, apparently always seeking for some favored spot where the soil was rich enough to maintain a man with little or no labor. It does not appear that he ever found any such place, but up to the day of his death he was looking for it. When Abraham Lincoln was a boy (he was born in 1809) the depression of trade and

commerce throughout the towns and villages of the old Thirteen States was very great. The War of 1812 had been finished, and the condition of the country, after a brief period of prosperity, was most deplorable. The value of imported goods brought into the United States from foreign parts was nearly four times as great as those exported. The public debt of the government was $42,000,000, and the debts of the several States added together were about one-half that sum. Specie had gone out of the country to pay for imports, and an almost worthless paper currency flooded the States and Territories of the West.

The consequences of a long embargo, when all American ports were closed to commerce, nothing going out and nothing coming in, were still felt in every town, city, and settlement in the broad land. The manufacturing industries of the republic were few and feeble, and imported articles were so dear as to be out of the reach of all but the rich. Thorns were used for pins, and bits of bone or slices of corn-cob were used for buttons; and, except in times of plenty, crusts of rye bread served as a substitute for coffee, and the dried leaves of currant-bushes were used in place of imported tea. The common drink of the people in the West was corn whiskey tempered with water, and the principal sustenance of the settlers was the wild game with which the woods swarmed. Bears, deer, woodchucks, raccoons, wild turkeys, and other furred and feathered creatures furnished the table and the

scanty wardrobe of the settlers. Every man and boy was a hunter and a trapper. It was a hard life; hard for the children, hardest for the women.

Abraham Lincoln in his eighth year was tall, ungainly, fast-growing, long-legged, and

Lincoln's Early Home at Elizabethtown, Ky.

dressed in the garb of the frontier. He wore a shirt of homespun cotton and wool, dyed, if colored at all, with a mixture from the roots and barks of the forest. According to his own account, he never wore stockings until he was "a young man grown." His feet were covered with rough cow-hide shoes, but oftener with

moccasins made by his mother's hands or procured from the Indians. Deer-skin leggings or breeches and a hunting shirt of the same stuff completed his outfit, except for the 'coon-skin cap which adorned his shaggy head, the tail of the 'coon hanging down behind as an ornament and a convenient handle thereof.

It was in the autumn of 1816 that the Lincolns took up their abode in the wilds of Indiana, having lately migrated from Kentucky. They lived in a log cabin built from logs felled by the father, Thomas Lincoln, with the slight assistance of his boy. There was no floor to this abode but the mother-earth, cleaned and pounded hard. Later on, when by a second marriage the necessity came for putting on a better appearance, a floor was laid of slabs of wood split from oak and hickory logs, laid on joists of timber and loosely kept in place by wooden pins. Years afterward, when the pioneer boy had become the tenant of the White House, he could remember how he lay in bed of a bitter, cold morning, listening for his mother's footsteps rattling the slabs of the rough oaken floor as she came to rouse him from his pretended sleep.

Early the lad learned the use of the axe, the maul, and the wedge. These, with the froe, a clumsy iron tool, were required for the splitting of rails and billets of wood to be used in the rough architecture and manufacture of the home and its furniture. The lad's sinews were hardened, his hands toughened, and his mind stored with a knowledge of wood-craft and every vari-

ety of timber which he never forgot. The family was surrounded with the forests. The times were superstitious, and the woods, to many of the people, were filled with strange noises, mysterious whisperings, and wild, uncanny creatures. They heard the hollow murmur of distant streams and the low hum that goes up continually from the hidden life of the woods; and in the silence and mysterious darkness of the forest young Lincoln found his most congenial place of meditation, though the hard-working lad had little time for solitary thought and communing with nature. But here, as he has himself said, he acquired habits of reflection, and he admitted that he did not like work any better than other boys of his age. He did like to spend hours in roaming the wild-wood, and never to the latest day of his life did he forget the traditions and the scenery of the wilderness in which his boyhood was spent.

Lincoln's mother died, in 1818, of a mysterious disease known as the "milk sick," which ravaged all that region, and is to this day recalled as a strange and uncatalogued species of pestilence. This was the lad's first great sorrow, and long after, when the spot where she was buried had been covered by the wreck of the forests, her son was wont to say, "All that I am or hope to be I owe to my angel mother;" and the first letter he ever wrote was written to a parson whom they had known in Kentucky, and whom the family now entreated to come and preach the funeral sermon over the grave of Nancy Hanks Lincoln.

Shiftless Thomas Lincoln was now the only reliance of the little brood of children, the eldest of which was Sarah, scarcely twelve years old; Abe, two years younger; and Dennis Hanks, an orphan cousin of young Lincoln, a little over eight years old. After struggling with his adverse circumstances for a while alone, Thomas Lincoln went off and procured for himself a second wife. She was Sally Johnston, of Elizabethtown, Ky., and it was to her as much as to his own mother that Abraham owed much of his future comfort. He had already learned to read at his mother's knee. The three books he first absorbed were the Bible, "Æsop's Fables," and the "Pilgrim's Progress." On these three were formed the literary taste of Abraham Lincoln. So diligently did he study them that he could repeat from memory many whole chapters of the Bible, all of the striking passages of Bunyan's immortal book, and every one of the fables of Æsop. "The Life of Henry Clay," which his mother had managed to procure for him, was his fourth and one of his choicest treasures. Ramsey's "Life of Washington," and another by Weems, were added by slow degrees to his slender stock of books. Wherever he heard of a book that could be borrowed, or even read on the premises of the owner, thither he went and gave the book-owner no peace until he had absorbed it. With the coming of the step-mother, who was a woman of thrift and energy, came something like comfort into the log cabin of the Lincolns. She brought with her bedding, knives

and forks, and numerous other things to which the little family had been unaccustomed. Then, as Lincoln said, he "began to feel like a human being." Reading with him begot a desire to write, and as paper was a luxury almost out of the reach of the pioneer children of those days, he smoothed shingles or took the smooth side of a wooden shovel and composed thereon essays on topics of the time, and even occasionally tried verse-making. He learned to be concise in his literary style by the circumscribed character of his writing materials. He could not use many words when writing with a big piece of charcoal on a shingle. The future President of the United States acquired that habit of condensing his thoughts for which he was afterward famous, in a severe school.

His step-mother said of him: "He read everything he could lay his hands on, and when he came across a passage that struck him, he would write it down on boards, if he had no paper, and keep it by him until he could get paper. Then he would copy it, look at it, commit it to memory, and repeat it." In this way he collected a great many things from books that he did not own and could not keep, and at the age of ten he had set up a commonplace book in which were written the noble thoughts and melodious lines of famous men. Later, but while he was yet a callow youth, some of the literary productions of his own were thought good enough for publication in the county newspaper. Of schooling he had very little. Occasionally a school-teacher would

come into the neighborhood, miles away perhaps, and the little brood of children—Abraham, his sister, and his cousin Dennis—would be sent to trudge through the wild-wood or through the snow to the log schoolhouse.

When he was seventeen years old he walked a long distance to attend court, where he heard one of the famous Breckinridges, of Kentucky, make a notable speech in a murder trial. The lawyer's effort stirred the sleeping genius of the lad, and from that day he practised speech-making. He would take up any topic that happened to be uppermost in the rural neighborhood—road-building, laying out trails, school-tax, bounty on wolves or bears—and, as he called it, "speechify" to the gaping rustics who stood around to hear him deliver his semi-humorous and extemporaneous addresses. Sometimes he would get up a mock trial and arraign an imaginary culprit, and, himself acting as prosecuting attorney, counsel for the defendant, judge, and jury, go through the formula and the addresses of a regular court. This entertainment interfered with the work of the people and was forbidden by his father, who grumbled, "When Abe begins to speak, all hands flock to hear him."

One notable thing about this lad was that when he had begun to study anything he was never satisfied until he had got to the root of it. He wrote and rewrote all that he wanted to commit to memory. No difficult problem would he give up; and when he encountered a fact

which to him seemed inexplicable, he never rested until it was explained and he had mastered its secret. In all things he was thorough. Years afterward, when he was President, and a person came to him with a story of a plot or conspiracy, with very little information to back up his tale, Lincoln said: "There is one thing I have learned and you have not. It is only one word—'thorough.'" Bringing his hand down on the table with a thump to emphasize his meaning, he repeated, "Thorough."

Although he never played cards, never learned to dance, never drank any intoxicating liquors of any sort whatsoever, and never used a profane word, he was an important figure in the rude frolics of the settlement. He very soon acquired an enormous store of amusing stories. He was a good mimic, and in wrestling matches he was renowned. When seventeen years old he had attained his full height, six feet four inches; and a powerful and muscular youth was he. But his giant strength was never used to oppress or to annoy. In sport he tried his muscular powers of endurance, and many a time he interfered as a peacemaker to break up what seemed to be a dangerous fight. Far and wide in the sparsely settled country where he lived he was famed for his good nature, his enormous strength, and his readiness to lend a hand in any work or sport. But we can well understand how he was regarded with strange curiosity by the rude, unlettered pioneers, who scarcely understood why this tough clodhopper should spend all his spare

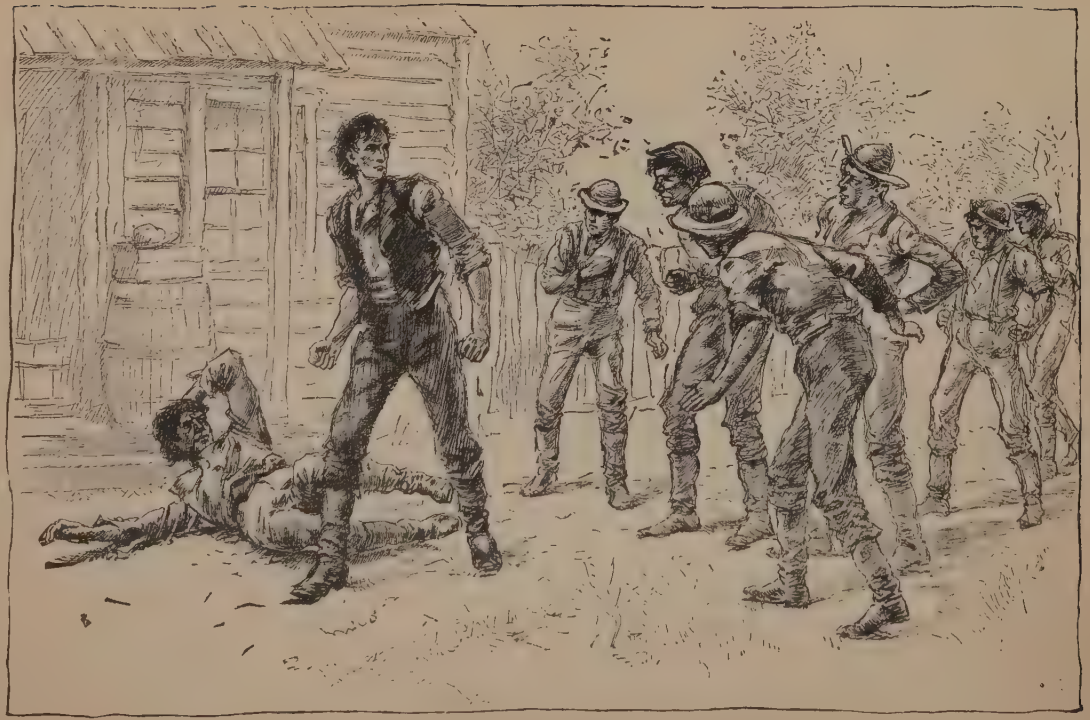
time in poring over books and in the writing which to them seemed so mysterious and useless.

When he was eighteen years old he had his first glimpse of the world outside the woody settlement of Southern Indiana. He built with his own hands a boat, which, being loaded with products of the neighborhood, was paddled down stream to the nearest trading-post, where the cargo was disposed of. Here he saw a steamboat coming up the river, and being engaged by two wayfarers to take them and their trunks out to the steamer from the bank, he was paid two silver half-dollars, his first great earnings. "I could scarcely believe my eyes," he said, years afterward. "You may think it a very little thing, but it was the most important incident in my life. I could scarcely believe that I, a poor boy, had earned a dollar in less than a day. The world seemed wider and fairer before me. I was a more hopeful and confident being from that time."

Two years later he went down the Mississippi River to New Orleans as a flat-boatman, where he had a series of entertaining adventures and saw still more of the great world. Shortly after his return his father moved again—this time to Illinois—and on the fifteen-day journey to the fat lands of Macon County, where the old man expected to find milk and honey flowing, Lincoln drove the ox-wagon which carried the household goods; and when the family once more cast anchor, another log cabin was built, and Abraham not only played a man's part in felling the

logs and building the cabin, but also, with his cousin, Thomas Hanks, he split the rails that fenced in the fifteen acres which were to be put under cultivation. This done, young Abraham "struck out for himself." He was ready to do work wherever he could get it, and again as a flat-boatman he made another venture to New Orleans, where he got his first glimpse of slavery. It has been put on record by one of his companions that his heart bled, "and slavery ran its iron into him then and there." He lived several years at New Salem, one of those little mushroom villages that rise and fall in the uneasy movement of a new population, and his succeeding years were homeless, half the time working and half the time idling, and without any special aim in life except to gain food and shelter. He was a pilot on a steamboat, clerk in a store or a mill, and drifting about from time to time, always in pursuit of something better. Somehow, "tending" a country store suited him best; it gave him leisure to read, study, and meditate.

As a wrestler and an athlete, the tall, gaunt young Kentuckian soon acquired great fame, and in an encounter with a party of overgrown young men of Clary's Grove, a settlement not far from New Salem, he gave them a test of his quality. The entire gang were ready to break in and interrupt a wrestling-bout between himself and one Jack Armstrong, when his antagonist, resorting to foul play, so roused the wrath of Lincoln that, putting forth all his



Lincoln's Wrestling-bout with Armstrong.

giant strength, he flung Armstrong in the air, the legs of the champion of the Clary's Grove boys whirling madly around his head. At this astounding performance the entire party made a dead set against the new-comer, who was calmly waiting their onset, when the vanquished champion chivalrously demanded a truce. Shaking Lincoln by the hand, he said: "Boys, Abe Lincoln is the best fellow that ever broke into this settlement. He shall be one of us." Lincoln by general consent became the peacemaker and the arbitrator of all the petty quarrels of the neighborhood; shunning vulgar brawls himself, he attempted to keep others out of them, and when debate around the door of the cross-roads store grew too animated and blows came in to settle disputes, the terrific windmill of Lincoln's long arms invariably brought peace. One of the luxuries of that time with him was a subscription to the Louisville *Courier*, then edited by that famous Whig, George D. Prentice, and to secure the paper Lincoln denied himself necessary clothing. He was studying politics.

The Black Hawk War, a disturbance in the northern part of Illinois in 1832, called forth his patriotism and energies, and at the head of a little company of volunteers he marched to the relief of the panic-stricken country. It was here that he secured his first and only martial honor. It was the title of Captain. In this capacity he saved the life of an old savage who had strayed from his own camp, and was res-

cued from instant death by Lincoln, who interposed, at the risk of his own life, between his soldiers and the wanderer. Returning home —the war soon over—he was a candidate for the Legislature, and was brought into contact with many of the prominent men of the State, and he took the stump in his own behalf. In this venture he was defeated ; but the next year he was more successful, and then served in the State Legislature three terms. It was here that his political ambition became aroused, and espousing the then popular policy of the Whigs —internal improvements—he helped to project a great variety of improvements, very few of which ever took on material shape. But he did, however, plume himself greatly on his success in changing the capital from Vandalia to Springfield—a piece of political management which in later years he regarded with amusement and contempt. In Springfield he now "hung out his shingle" as a lawyer. He had read Blackstone—almost committed the work to memory—and had by practising in a small way among his neighbors secured a fair legal education, and was readily admitted to the Bar. He had undertaken small cases on trial before the local justice of the peace, and had been "everybody's friend." He had tried his hand, too, at surveying, and was in fact a jack-of-all-trades, readily turning his hand to every form of activity required in a raw, new country like that in which he lived. His very first case in the United States Circuit Court he threw up, with the dec-

laration that on careful examination he found all the authorities on the other side and none on his. This characteristic honesty of purpose and frankness of opinion was only part and parcel of his character, already well formed. He was the protector of the innocent and the oppressed, the prosecutor of wrong-doing, and, with his habit of going thoroughly to the bottom of things, was usually able to convince any jury of the justice of his case; and the appeals he made to reason were so fervid that his hearers were often astonished and, as we may say, convinced against their will.

On the stump, as a frequent candidate for the Legislature, or an advocate of the political claims of other men, he made himself so acceptable to the gatherings of the neighborhood that he always drew a crowd wherever he went; and in the chats that followed as the concourse broke up into groups when speaking was over, Lincoln learned the ways and manners of the different communities that came together, weaving their lines of limited travel to and fro as these occasions came and went. His knowledge of human nature and of the plain people, already very great, was wonderfully increased by these experiences. He early put himself on record as opposed to the further extension of the American system of human slavery. He was one of two signers to a protest on the subject of domestic slavery, which was received and spread on the journals of the General Assembly of Illinois. The backwoods stories, the legends of Indian

fightings and superstitions, the folk-lore of a generation, and the latest political and social gossip of the frontier were poured into the receptive mind of the man who in later years was to be a thoroughly equipped master of human nature as human nature is developed in the life of the American people.

In 1846 he was elected a Representative in Congress, after several disappointments. His competitor on the Democratic ticket was Peter Cartwright, a famous backwoods preacher and exhorter, whose popularity was supposed to be so great that Lincoln would be literally nowhere in the race; but when Lincoln took the stump for himself he had plenty of material for his addresses to the people. The new State of Texas had been just admitted to the Union, and the slavery question was now once more before the people for adjustment. One of the first acts of his Congressional career, which was not an especially brilliant one, was to offer a series of resolutions calling on the President (James K. Polk) to inform the House as to certain facts involved in the war which followed the annexation of Texas. Another was the introduction of a bill to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia. Thus early did he take his stand on the burning question which was destined to occupy so much of his life and energy in the years to come.

His term in Congress over, he sought from the new Whig President, General Taylor, the place of Commissioner of the General Land Office, where he hoped to make useful the knowledge

that he had acquired as a land-surveyor, and to help carry out some of his ambitious schemes for internal improvements. He was disappointed, and later on, when the Territorial Governorship of Oregon was offered to him, he hesitated, but finally declined it. Returning to Springfield, he

The Home of Lincoln at Springfield, Ill.

took up his duties as an attorney, and again plunged into politics, when the Kansas-Nebraska bill of 1854 roused the country once more to a sense of impending danger from slavery. It was at this time that he went to the Eastern States—one of the few liberal Whigs of the West—to support the nominees for the party. He appeared

to look with disfavor on the Free Soil party, then coming into existence, and claimed that the anti-slavery proclivities of the Whig party were sufficient guaranty that that organization would do its best to mollify the acerbities of the conflict. The North was aflame with the excitement which followed the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the passage of Douglas's Kansas-Nebraska bill. Stephen A. Douglas returned to Illinois, from which State he was United States Senator, but was called to account for his stewardship. He made a speech at Springfield, Ill., where, for the first time, he met in debate Abraham Lincoln, who was to be his most dreaded adversary. Douglas spoke to the people in justification of his course in Congress and in defence of the Kansas-Nebraska bill. Next day Lincoln replied to Douglas, and all accounts agree that his was a wonderful and memorable speech. It was in this speech that Lincoln gave one of his memorable sayings. When replying to Douglas he said: "I admit that the emigrant to Kansas and Nebraska is competent to govern himself, but I deny his right to govern any other person without that person's consent." At another point in his speech he said: "In the view of Judge Douglas, the question whether a new country shall be slave or free is a matter of as utter indifference as it is whether his neighbor was to plant his farm with tobacco or stock it with horned cattle." At the close of a speech in Peoria, Ill., Douglas said to Lincoln: "You understand this question of prohibiting slavery in the Territories

better than all the opposition in the Senate of the United States. I cannot make anything by debating it with you. You, Lincoln, have here and at Springfield given me more trouble than all the opposition in the Senate combined." Douglas appealed to Lincoln's magnanimity to agree that there should be no more joint discussions, and to this Lincoln reluctantly assented.

The Legislature elected that year in Illinois (in 1854) was to choose a Senator who should be a colleague with Douglas. When the election was over it was found that the anti-Douglas men were in a majority, but they were not united. Some of them were in favor of Lyman Trumbull and some of Abraham Lincoln, and after ten unsuccessful ballots Lincoln persuaded his friends to vote for Trumbull, who was thereupon elected. This generous concession on the part of Lincoln solidified the anti-Douglas party in the Legislature, and was greatly praised by those who knew that Trumbull had never been the political friend of Lincoln, but usually his opponent and unfriendly critic.

In May, 1856, the Republican party of the State of Illinois was born in a convention held at Bloomington. Lincoln's advice was sought, and he said: "Let us in building our new party make our corner-stone the Declaration of Independence. Let us build on this rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against us." And Lincoln's idea was embodied in this resolution adopted by the convention: "Resolved, that we hold, in accordance with the opinions and prac-

tices of all the great statesmen of all parties, for the first sixty years of the administration of the government, that under the Constitution, Congress possesses full power to prohibit slavery in the Territories; and that, while we will maintain all constitutional rights of the South, we also hold that justice, humanity, the principles of freedom as expressed in our Declaration of Independence and our National Constitution, and the purity and perpetuity of our government, require that that power shall be exerted to prevent the extension of slavery into Territories heretofore free." In the election which followed, Buchanan was the regular Democratic candidate, Douglas having been defeated in the nominating convention. John C. Fremont was the candidate of the Republicans, and Millard Fillmore of a third party known as the American party. The campaign was virulent, feverish, and excited. Lincoln took the field for the Republican ticket, which was, however, defeated—although Bissell, the Republican candidate for Governor of Illinois, was elected—the electoral vote of the State being given to Buchanan.

Two years later, when the Senatorial term of Douglas was drawing to a close, he was once more pitted against Lincoln, who had now become the leader of the Republicans of his own State. They refused to trust Douglas, and in open convention declared that Abraham Lincoln was their first and only choice for the United States Senate to fill the vacancy about to be created by the expiration of Douglas's term of

office. The two candidates now took the field in one of the most famous political contests ever witnessed in this country. They arranged for a series of joint debates at different points throughout the State. When Lincoln read the manuscript of his speech to an intimate friend, that gentleman was dismayed by finding that the key-note of the speech was in its first sentence: "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free." Lincoln's friends urged that while this was all perfectly true, it would be hardly discreet to make so bold and radical an announcement at that time. People were still very tender on the subject of slavery, and the epithets "Abolitionist" and "Black Republican" were freely bandied, much to the chagrin of the followers of the new party. Defending his phrase, "A house divided against itself," Lincoln said in reply: "This proposition has been true for six thousand years. I will deliver the speech as it is written." And he did. In the course of that address he said: "I do not expect the Union to be dissolved; I do not expect the house to fall; but I do expect it will cease to be divided: it will become all one thing or all the other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind will rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction, or its advocates will push it forward until it shall become lawful in all States, old as well as new, North as well as South."

This wonderful debate attracted multitudes of people far and wide. Wherever the two champions appeared, vast throngs of people congregated and listened with delight, or cheered with boisterous enthusiasm their favorites as each made what they considered to be unanswerable arguments against each other. Lincoln's herculean form towered far above the audience which he addressed. His face was dark and seamed, his eyes deep-set beneath overhanging and shaggy brows; beardless was his face, and a far-away look on his often-sad features at times struck even casual observers as profoundly pathetic. But his manner, when he was alert, was bright, and even jovial, and in speaking he impressed every one with his directness, simplicity, good sense, clearness of statement, wit and humor, and absolute fairness.

The two important topics before the country then were the Dred Scott decision—by which slavery was declared to be constitutional and right and lawful in the Territories—and the struggle then going on in Kansas between Free-State and Slave-State men. Douglas's favorite doctrine of popular sovereignty was to the effect that the people in the Territories had the right to vote slavery up or down as they liked; but the Dred Scott decision of Judge Taney was to the effect that slavery was already in the Territories. Obviously, these two propositions were irreconcilable. It was Lincoln's purpose to compel Douglas to say whether he thought slavery right or wrong in itself. In his view the

Dred Scott decision and the Douglas idea of popular sovereignty could not be held together in one man's belief. So he framed questions designed to bring the matter before Douglas in such a shape as to oblige him to admit or deny the abstract right of slavery. Lincoln's friends remonstrated with him. "If you put that question to him," they said, "he will perceive that the answer, giving practical force and effect to the Dred Scott decision in the Territories, inevitably loses him the battle, and he will therefore reply by offering the decision as an abstract principle, but denying its practical application. He will say that the decision is just and right, but it is not to be put into force and effect in the Territories." "If he takes that chute," said Lincoln, "he can never be President." Lincoln's anxious friends replied, "That is not your lookout; you are after the Senatorship." "No, gentlemen," he said, "I am killing larger game. The battle of 1860 is worth a hundred of this." It is barely possible that Lincoln even then saw so far ahead as to think he might be the Republican candidate for the Presidency in 1860; but the chances are that he was thinking of the battle for freedom and not of himself. For his time had not yet come. Douglas was elected United States Senator, although the number of votes polled in the election for members of the Legislature were more in Lincoln's favor than in Douglas's; but as there were certain hold-over Senators whose votes were to be counted in the election of United States Senator, the real victory rested with Douglas.

From that contest emerged the great, majestic figure of Abraham Lincoln, easily the leader and champion of the Free-Soil party of the West. The joint debate attracted attention not only in the West, but all over the United States, and wherever the political situation was discussed

The St. Gauden's Statue of Lincoln at Lincoln Park, Chicago.

there was heard the name of Lincoln. His greatest power as a debater was the charm of his individuality. His voice was rather high and shrill, his figure awkward, and his movements ungraceful; but the strong sympathetic element that dominated his nature was always perceptible through everything he said or did.

He was pre-eminently a man of the people, the people's advocate; he was of "the plain people." He understood their joys, their sorrows, their hopes, their ambitions. He entered more fully into their sympathies than any public man who ever lived, and as the contest drew on when the last battle in the field of politics should be fought between freedom and slavery, he gradually became the people's champion as against a great wrong, rather than the champion and advocate of any great moral or political principle. From this time forth we must recognize him as speaking always in the capacity of an attorney for the people. Not only here, but later on, when the war for the Union had begun, and when it was at its height, he always aimed to be the agent and the instrument of the people.

The Republicans of Illinois at their annual convention, in May, 1859, formally presented Lincoln as their candidate for the Presidency in 1860. During the convention some of the pioneers or earlier settlers of the State made their entry into the hall of the convention with the announcement that a Macon County Democrat had a contribution at the door. The curiosity of the delegates was stimulated and they looked to see two ancient fence-rails, decorated with ribbons of red, white, and blue, borne into the hall by Thomas Hanks, on the rails being the inscription, "Abraham Lincoln, the Rail Candidate for the Presidency in 1860. Two rails from a lot of three thousand made in 1830 by Thomas Hanks and Abe Lincoln, whose

father was the first pioneer in Macon County." Years afterward, Lincoln being asked if he supposed those were the real rails that he and Hanks had made, said: "I would not make an affidavit that they were; but Hanks and I did make rails on that piece of ground, although I think I could make better rails now, and I did say that if there were any rails that we had split, I should not wonder if those were the rails." This was as near to verifying the authenticity of those celebrated rails as Lincoln was willing to go, and it may be added that he profoundly disapproved of the whole proceeding.

Early in 1860, Lincoln was invited to speak in Brooklyn, N. Y., but the place of assembly was finally changed to Cooper Union, New York, one of the largest halls in the United States, which was filled to overflowing with a tremendous crowd of people anxious to hear the noted orator from the West. It is a matter of record that when he rose to speak the people were disappointed. He was ill-dressed; his bushy head, with the stiff, black hair thrown back, was balanced on a long, lean head-stalk, and when he raised his hands in an opening gesture, the impression he gave was one of great awkwardness. The tones of his voice at first were low and husky, and a visible expression of dismay spread over the face of his audience; but very soon he roused himself, and as the magic of his eloquence flowed out, men forgot his appearance, and the man was lost sight of in the orator. It may be said that this speech not only was brill-

iantly successful as an eloquent exposition of the doctrines of the Republican party, but it gave Lincoln great and instant vogue throughout the older States of the Union. His theme was a saying of Douglas, "Our fathers when they framed the government under which we live understood the question (the question of slavery) just as well, and even better, than we do now." His speech was an inquiry into what the fathers who framed the government thought and did about slavery, and all who heard that address marvelled greatly at its logic, its keen analysis, and its lucid and unimpeachable English. The audience at times was swept by a whirlwind of applause.

The time for holding the Republican National Convention drew on, and that body assembled in Chicago, June 17, 1860. The candidates named were William H. Seward, Abraham Lincoln, Simon Cameron, Salmon P. Chase, Edward Bates, and John McLean. Seward was at first the leading candidate, but the enthusiasm in the galleries and in the crowds that surrounded the vast building where the convention was held was probably a factor in the influences that ultimately compelled the nomination of Lincoln. He was nominated on the third ballot, a large majority of the anti-Seward men finally going over to Lincoln and making his nomination a certainty. The liberal wing of the Democratic party nominated Stephen A. Douglas, and the extreme pro-slavery wing nominated John C. Breckinridge. The campaign that followed was conducted with tremendous

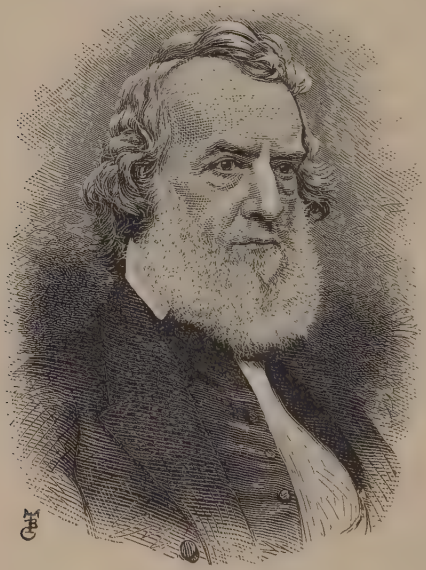
and sincere enthusiasm on the anti-slavery side, while the Democrats, divided between Douglas and Breckinridge, fought in a half-hearted way, and Lincoln was elected President by a majority of fifty-seven electoral votes. Almost as soon as this result was announced several of the States announced their intention to leave the Union.

Stephen A. Douglas.

The ordinance of secession was adopted by South Carolina, November 17, 1860; by Mississippi, January 9, 1861; Florida, January 10th; Alabama, February 11th; Georgia, January 19th; Louisiana, January 25th, and Texas, February 1st, and by the time Lincoln was ready to leave Springfield for Washington to take the oath of office, seven States had declared themselves out of the Union.

His inaugural address was an argument and a plea. Among other things he said: "The power confided to me will be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the government." This was in direct opposition to the opinion of the "anti-coercionists," as they were called, who said that the forts and military posts and navy-yards in the Southern States belonged to the seceding States as "their share" of the property of the government. He also argued against the possibility of complete separation, saying: "Physically speaking, we cannot separate; we cannot remove our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them." And while he showed that they must remain face to face, either as friends or enemies, and it would be more to the advantage of both that they should make their intercourse that of friends than as aliens, he argued that the whole matter in dispute should be left to all the people. He said: "While the people retain their virtue and vigilance, no administration, by any extreme wickedness or folly, can very seriously injure the government in the short space of four years." Throughout his speech he pleaded earnestly for union, peace, and harmony; but these arguments, it must be said, were addressed rather to the North than to the South. He desired that people should see that no reasonable concession would be neglected and no entreaty unspoken to win back and keep in the Union the wayward children of the South. In the kindest language he showed

how ill-advised secession must be, and asked that for their own sakes the secessionists should desist from carrying out their mad plans. He insisted that while it was not their duty to destroy the Union, it was his duty to preserve it, and while he hoped to do this without war or blood-



Gideon Welles.

shed, he declared with emphasis that it was his fixed purpose to do his whole duty by the whole country.

It is to be noticed that in the making-up of the Cabinet four of the seven members thereof had been candidates for the Presidential nomination at Chicago. William H. Seward was Secre-

tary of State; Simon Cameron, Secretary of War; Salmon P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury; Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy; Montgomery Blair, Postmaster-General; Caleb B. Smith, Secretary of the Interior; Edward Bates, Attorney-General.

Lincoln's supposed rawness, his unfamiliarity with statecraft, and his Western habits were by many believed to unfit him for the higher duties of statesmanship. More than one of his constitutional advisers was willing to take the responsibility of shaping the policy of the administration and carrying out plans for the solution of the appalling situation now forced upon the country. Mr. Seward, for example, proposed to divert the attention of the people from the threatened war in the South by provoking a series of foreign wars with other powers who had perhaps given occasion for offence. But with great calmness, Lincoln took into his own hands the direction of affairs, and as "the attorney for the people of the United States," he now began to organize ways and means, assisted by the members of his Cabinet, to crush the Rebellion.

From this time forward he was steadily actuated by but one purpose — to save the Union. For this he said he would sacrifice everything else; he would save the Union with slavery or without it, he would save the Union by war or without war, he would save the Union by using civil and military power, or he would save it by laying aside those powers so far as was practi-

cable; and the words most frequent on his lips were, "The Rebellion by all means to crush." In the conduct of the war which followed he constantly deferred to the wishes of the people, and when many of the more radical members of the Republican party urged an immediate emancipation of the slaves, or similar measures, he put them aside with various excuses; and although he incurred their dislike, if not their enmity, by his apparently too conservative course, he persisted in waiting until the time was ripe, never hurrying events, but always listening for the voice of the people. On one occasion, after McClellan had ceased for some time to be commander of the Army of the Potomac, Lincoln said to the writer of these lines: "I kept McClellan in command long after I had ceased to expect that he would win any victories, simply because I knew that his dismissal would provoke popular indignation and shake the faith of the people in the final success of the war." And if Lincoln had any fixed and individual opinions about the smaller details of the conduct of the war, he never forced them upon the public or upon those who were entrusted with the direction of military affairs. He was so deferential and so ready to accept the judgment of those whom he believed to be superior to him in technical knowledge, that he sometimes provoked others who had great faith in his administrative abilities, and possibly in his military knowledge; but at all times, by his vigor, his firmness, and his unshrinking determination, Lincoln showed

The National Lincoln Monument at Springfield, Ill.

the world that he, and not another, was the President of the United States.

He knew that "the plain people" were ready from the first to fight in defence of the Union; he knew that they were not at first ready to fight for the destruction of slavery; and so he perpetually put off every movement that was designed to promote the abolition of slavery, and called constantly for soldiers to defend the Union. He even went so far as to countermand the orders of some of the generals in the field who were willing to hasten the day of emancipation. It is possible that he may have seen the ultimate effect of this policy; it is certain that if the armies of the Union had early crushed the Rebellion, slavery would have been saved. But the events of the war, overruled by the hand of Providence, prolonged the struggle beyond all expectation, and finally made the further existence of slavery an impossibility. In the long contest that followed, the strongholds of slavery were one by one demolished, and at last, by the Emancipation proclamation issued by the President, and later ratified by the action of Congress, the death-blow was dealt to that institution.

On July 21, 1862, Lincoln's Cabinet was astonished when he laid before them the outline of a proclamation declaring free the slaves of all the States that should be in rebellion against the United States on January 1, 1863. As a matter of fact, he had made up his mind that this blow was inevitable, and the only question in his mind was when it should fall, and it

was to ask the advice of his Cabinet that he laid before them this document. At the suggestion of Secretary Seward the issuing of the proclamation was deferred for a time, as just then disaster and defeat had met the armies in almost every direction, and Seward thought that such a proclamation would then sound like "the last shriek of a perishing cause." The proclamation was postponed. Other defeats followed, and when Lee invaded Maryland, just before the battle of Antietam, Lincoln made a vow that if the Union army should now be blessed with success, the decree of freedom should be proclaimed. The victory of Antietam was won on September 17, 1862, and the Emancipation proclamation was issued on the 22d of that month. After so many years, slavery was dead.

There were yet other disasters in the field, and it was not until the battle of Gettysburg had been fought and the citadel of Vicksburg taken that men began to see the day breaking. Statesmen and politicians worried the good President with their plans for reconstructing the Union, and with their objections to his plans. They found fault with his readiness to adapt himself to differing conditions in different States where the Federal authority had been re-established, and they found fault with the way in which he put these things before the people. For example, one night, when he had addressed a crowd of cheering people who had come to greet him at the White House after a famous victory by Grant, he made use of the phrase "The rebels

turned tail and ran." Not long afterward, when he was to make a more extended address, I was invited by him to be near him at the historic window in the White House whence he was used to speak to the people. Noting my look of surprise at the roll of manuscript he had in his hand, just before we left the parlor for the upper part of the house he said: "It is true that I don't usually read a speech, but I am going to say something to-night that may be important. I am going to talk about reconstruction, and sometimes I am betrayed into saying things that other people don't like. In a little off-hand talk I made the other day I used the phrase 'Turned tail and ran.' A gentleman from Boston was very much offended by that, and I hope he won't be offended again." On the way upstairs the President turned to me and said, with a queer smile: "The gentleman from Boston was Senator Sumner." The speech that night was a justification of what had been done in Louisiana by way of reconstruction, a provisional government having been evolved from the military government that had been set up after the occupation of the State by the Federal forces. In the course of his address, which was clearly not what the vast and jubilant crowd had expected, Lincoln said: "We shall sooner have the fowl by hatching the egg than by smashing it." But Sumner was no better pleased with this than with the other figure of speech; for, in a letter to Dr. Lieber next day, he said: "The President's speech and other things augur confusion and uncertainty in the

future, with hot controversy. Alas! alas!" And in his tribute to Senator Collamer, later in that year (1865), Sumner said: "The eggs of crocodiles can produce only crocodiles, and it is not easy to see how eggs laid by military power can be hatched into an American State."

But in all these things the people loved and trusted Lincoln. They looked to him as their father. The quaint title "Father Abraham" with them meant something more than a humorous nickname. They knew that he wept with them and laughed with them, that he sorrowed in their sorrows and entered into their affairs almost like a providence. The hold he had upon the people was not so much by virtue of a commanding intellect and a supernal eloquence (though these were also his), as rather by virtue of his loving and tender heart, his profound sympathy with all sorts and conditions of men, his unfailing patience, magnanimity, and good nature, his abounding charity for all, and above all, his homely likeness to the plain people from whom he sprung, and of whom he was one to the last day of his life.

Lincoln was renominated and re-elected in the midst of the closing struggles of the civil war. This was the final test of his power with the people. There had been some factious opposition to his renomination. He had been opposed in the national canvass by a military commander, McClellan; and when his hour of victory came it was by an overwhelming and

tremendous popular vote, that left in the minds of men no question of the undying and deeply rooted love of the American people for Abraham Lincoln. In this day of triumph a lesser man than he would have exulted over those of his own political faith who were thus delivered into his hand. But his great and magnanimous soul held no thought of unkindness for those who had wounded him so deeply. Serenaded at the White House on the night next succeeding the November election of 1864, he said: "Now that the election is over, may not all, having a common interest, reunite in a common effort to save our common country? For my own part, I have striven, and will strive, to place no obstacle in the way. So long as I have been here, I have not willingly planted a thorn in any man's bosom. While I am deeply sensible to the high compliment of a re-election, it adds nothing to my satisfaction that any other man may be pained or disappointed by the result. May I ask those who were with me to join with me in the same spirit toward those who were against us?"

Lincoln's second inaugural address should be read with the first, if one would study the results wrought out in Lincoln's mind by four years of stress and strain as the head of the nation during a civil war. There are passages in this second inaugural address that are matchless in English literature. He was no longer the father plaintively pleading with wayward children who insisted upon fighting; he was rather

the elder brother lamenting the loss and woe which their headstrong acts had brought upon the people. He poured out the tenderness and devotion of his great soul in these closing words: "Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled up by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn by the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, that 'the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.' With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphans, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations." Well may it be said, "No American President had ever spoken words like these to the American people. America never had a President who found such words in the depths of his heart."

Now came the closing scenes of the war. Lee's army surrendered to Grant, and peace was assured. The people went wild with joy; bonfires and illuminations lighted up the Northern sky, and the city of Washington was a blaze of light, as cannon boomed their warlike notes

to proclaim that the war was over. In the midst of this jubilation, our people were stunned by the announcement that the good President had fallen in the national capital, stricken by the hand of an assassin. No words can picture the grief of the nation as these appalling tidings went forth. As by magic the scene was changed from one of festivity and joy to one of mourning and

House where Lincoln Died in Washington—516 Tenth Street, N. W.

lamentation. But the man and the hour had come and gone. The American Union was saved, slavery was destroyed, and peace at last brooded over a long-distracted and bleeding country. His work done, Lincoln's lifeless form was carried to his home in Springfield, Ill., where it was laid in the earth with many tears. The attorney for the people, as he always called himself, had prosecuted the cause entrusted to his hands. Trained as he

had been in the hard school of poverty and adversity, he had learned lessons of self-reliance and self-denial; he had learned the real value of human freedom, and had slowly absorbed into every fibre of his being the principles that lie at the foundation of human liberty and of self-government. His mission was ended.

They who complain, as certain analysts have complained, that Lincoln's character, so strangely and weirdly mixed, is a mystery, may rest in the belief that all great geniuses are mysterious. Shakespeare is a mystery so profound that men have been put to the rash expedient of insisting that there was no real personality in that name. The subtle processes of mind by which a great genius like Lincoln arrives at conclusions, divines men's motives and foresees events from afar, frames heaven-born truths in matchless words, or utters sayings of the profoundest wisdom, can never be understood by other men. It is useless to waste words in attempting any divination of the secret. It is even possible that the possessor of these rare gifts cannot himself understand them. Lincoln was to the last degree a reticent man. Although he had a certain free-and-easy, broad manner of meeting friendly approaches, there was in his nature a line beyond which not even his closest intimates could pass. None could be made uncomfortable by the feeling that he was repelled or excluded from that intimacy; but, with all his geniality and freedom of manner, he was never confiding of his innermost thoughts and emotions. Perhaps

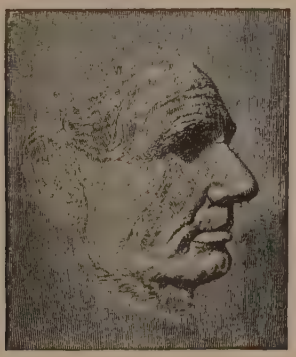
this reserve deepened the mystery of his being. It certainly did veil the inner recesses of his character.

He was more ambitious than most of the men of his time gave him credit for. I am convinced that he dreamed of the Presidency long before destiny and the people's choice had turned his face in the direction of the White House. He was conscious of power within himself very early in his political career. But he was wise and shrewd—shrewd almost to the point of cunning. Nobody better than he knew how to veil his purposes while he yet held these in abeyance. If he "fooled" his advisers and petitioners while he put off and again put off his action, it was that he might be absolutely sure of the step before he took it. Once taken, there never was a backward movement. Never for a moment relaxing his intention to do, he waited with a patience that was immovable the ripeness of the time and the readiness of the people to go with him to the end of the thing to be done. Although he appeared to be led, he constantly and artfully and subtly led.

To the last his manners were simple, unaffected, and free from even the appearance of self-conscious greatness. When touched in his manly dignity, he showed his resentment; and at times, when he had been too long subjected to the worry and strain of the duties of his place, he was humanly irritable and even captious. Once, when a visitor had exhausted his patience with his profanity, he rose and, with awful dig-

nity, motioned the offender through the opened door. And at another time, when one of his dearest friends had been maligned in a memorial laid before him, he asked if the paper were his to treat as he pleased, and answered affirmatively, he calmly laid the document on the burning coals in the grate and bade the delegates good-morning.

The folk-lore, the multitudinous stories ab-

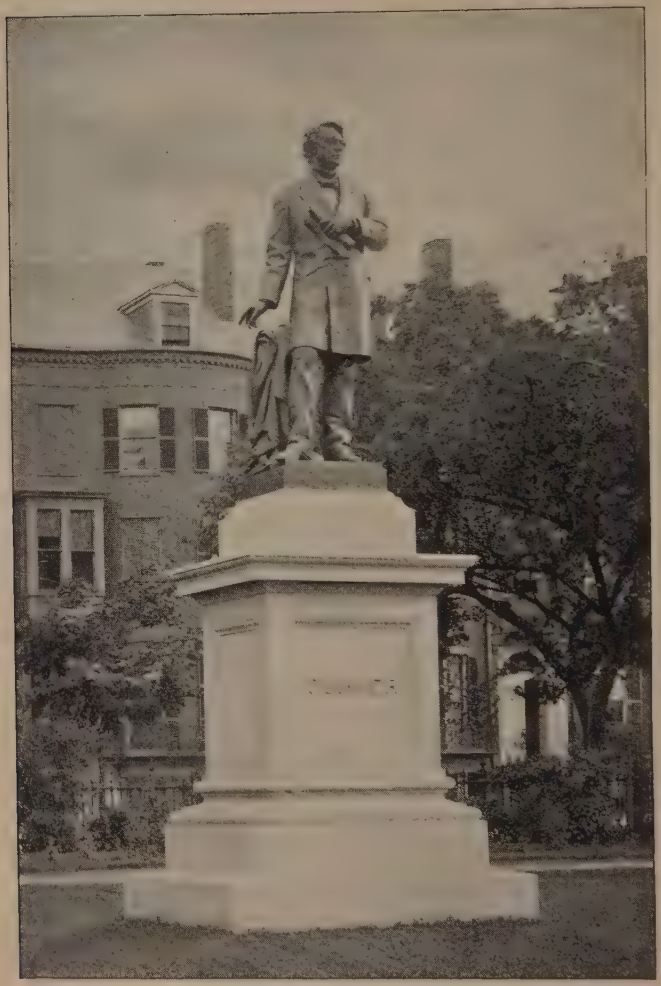


Death-mask of Lincoln.

sorbed in the years of his roving frontier life, were of inestimable value to Lincoln; and these are popularly associated in any view of his life and character. But he seldom told a story for the mere sake of telling it. Invariably, the anecdote, the incident, the humorsome jest had pith and point. Taken from the setting that Lincoln gave it, it was merely funny; as he gave it, it was the barbed arrow that sent the argument or saying home. This has been excellently de-

scribed by Emerson, who, in his funeral address at Concord, said: "He is the author of a multitude of good sayings, so disguised as pleasantries that it is certain that they had no reputation at first but as jests; and only later, by the very acceptance and adoption they find in the mouths of millions, turn out to be the wisdom of the hour. I am sure if this man had ruled in a period of less facility of printing, he would have become mythological in a very few years, like Æsop or Pilpay, or one of the Seven Wise Masters, by his fables and proverbs."

Whatever were his limitations, and these were apparent to those who knew him, Lincoln was fully equal to the time in which he lived and to the vast burden that he lifted and carried with giant ease and strength. The tragicalness, the needlessness, so to speak, of his taking-off will always remain to mortal eyes inexplicable. Why he should not have been permitted to live and enjoy the well-earned fruits of four years of strenuous labor, why he should have been allowed only to look over into the Promised Land of Peace from the Pisgah summit of those last sad days, we may not know. Somewhere in God's eternal plan that noble, self-denying soul lives and rejoices in its strength. And even we, disconsolately lamenting his unrewarded years of toil, may find some consolation in the thought that in the vast movements of humanity in which nations and individuals are insignificant factors, the life of Lincoln was long enough to serve its majestic mission.



The Statue of Sumner, by Thomas Ball, in the Public Garden, Boston.

# VIII.

## CHARLES SUMNER.

In October, 1850, Charles Sumner delivered a wonderful speech in Faneuil Hall, Boston. This was at the important turning-point in the history of American politics when old parties were dissolving, and from their elements were rising the two great parties (for there were really only two) that were to stand arrayed against each other until the civil war should destroy slavery and open another epoch in the history of civilization. It was my good fortune to sit within a few feet of the rostrum, at a reporters' table, looking up at the young Apollo, who towered like a demigod at an immense height over us. I remember one reporter, who, fascinated by the sight, looked up and breathlessly said: "Great God! that man seems twenty feet high!"

His personal appearance was not only one of extreme elegance—for he was always dressed with scrupulous care—but of magnificent and manly proportions. He was six feet and two inches high, well formed, with a magnificent head of hair, dark, lustrous eyes, perfect teeth, and features that might be called Romanesque. His gestures were large and sweeping, his voice resonant and musical, but without any such great

compass as that of Wendell Phillips or Henry Clay, both of whom he somewhat resembled in his general style of oratory. One of his biographers has given this account of his appearance at the age of twenty-two: "He was tall and gaunt, weighing only one hundred and twenty pounds; his hair was dark brown, his eyes hazel and inflamed by excessive use; his face sharp-featured; his teeth gleaming with whiteness; his complexion dark and not clear; his visage and person not attractive to the eye, and far unlike his presence in later life, when, with full proportions and classic features, he arrested attention in the Senate and on the street. . . . His voice was strong, clear, and sonorous; his countenance was lighted up with expression, and his genial smile won friends upon an introduction. His spirits were buoyant in company, and his laugh was loud and hearty." I have said that he was careful in his attire. This habit stuck to him through life, and even when he was an undergraduate of Harvard he refused to conform to the rules of dress prescribed by the faculty, and persisted in wearing a buff-colored waistcoat, for which he received an "admonition for illegal dress." As to his height, an amusing incident is related by B. P. Poore, who says: "On Lincoln's arrival in Washington, shortly before his inauguration, in 1861, he met Sumner for the first time. Lincoln said: 'Sumner declined to stand up with me back to back to see which was the taller man, and made a fine speech about this being the time for uniting our fronts against the

enemy and not our backs; but I guess he was afraid to measure them. He is a good piece of a man. I had never had much to do with bishops where I lived, but do you know Sumner is my idea of a bishop.'" As a matter of fact, it may be said here that Sumner and Lincoln were very nearly the same height; Lincoln was six feet four inches.

The first impression that most people gained of Sumner, even in his earlier years in Boston, long before he had acquired great fame as an orator and a statesman, was not altogether favorable. He impressed one with his egotism and profound self-admiration. He always delighted to talk of the celebrated people he met, and of the attentions lavished upon him, and to air his erudition and his learning, of which he certainly possessed a great store. His accomplished biographer and literary executor, Edward L. Pierce, has this to say of him: "It pleased him to know the effect of his orations, and to let others know it also. This habit, which developed when he took the platform in Boston, remained with him to the end. There was always in it, as well in middle life as in youth, something spontaneous, artless, childlike, the natural expression of a frank nature, with no purpose to exalt himself or depreciate others. Tact would have imposed greater reserve, for the habit repelled many, particularly those who had the ambition without the power to do what he could do. People who are clever, without breadth or strength, are disposed to harp upon such a limitation, overlook-

ing altogether the talents and service which may accompany it. . . . This quality or habit of Sumner, whatever he had of it, was harmless. It led him to no distorted view of men and things; to no underestimate of other men's powers; to no disparagement of their work, and no disregard of their opinions and counsels. Jealousy and envy were no part of his nature. He praised generously, even lavishly, not only those younger than himself or inferior in position, but those also who were his peers in office or his rivals for fame." Whittier doubtless had this defect in mind when, after his death, he wrote of Sumner thus:

> " Safely his dearest friends may own
> The slight defects he never hid,
> The surface blemish in the stone
> Of the tall, stately pyramid.
>
> " What if he felt the natural pride
> Of power in noble use too true,
> With thin humilities to hide
> The work he did, the lore he knew ? "

The charge that he was a tuft-hunter or seeker after titled folk was often made unjustly against him, but it so happens that in this country of ours a titled foreigner is likely to be a person of distinction whose acquaintance would be desirable to any person. Being at the White House one day during Lincoln's administration, the President asked me if, on arriving at the Capitol, whither I was going, I would say to Senator Sumner that he (the President) would be glad if

the Senator would call to see him later in the day, if entirely convenient. I sought out Mr. Sumner and delivered the message, whereupon, in his most magnificent manner, he said: "Let me see. I have an engagement to take luncheon with the Marquis de Chambrun, and later to dine with the British Minister. Yes, yes, I think I will go; I think I will go. Pray tell the President so." There was no need for Senator Sumner to tell an unimportant person like myself what his engagements with great people were; and he knew very well that I should not see the President again that day.

Before Sumner was elected to the Senate he passed several years abroad. He was then at an impressionable age—twenty-seven years—and his long residence abroad (some two years and three or four months) gave him a certain air of foreign distinction which to sensitive critics was exceedingly offensive. While abroad he met many desirable acquaintances, and he said in a letter to a friend at home: "I now hardly call to mind a person in England that I cared to see whom I have not met under circumstances the most agreeable and flattering to myself." His rare intelligence on topics interesting to Englishmen, their politics, history, law, literature, authorship, and public men commended him to the best people in England. It is possible that his brilliant social successes abroad and his thoroughly enjoyable residence there made him somewhat disaffected toward the comparatively raw culture of

his own land. On his return from abroad he went into the practice of law, the details of which were to him exceedingly irksome, and he could not refrain from confessing to his intimate friends that he had little heart for the drudgery

The Bust of Sumner in the Museum of Art, Boston, by his friend, Thomas Crawford.

of a law office. "Sometimes," says Mr. Pierce, "at this period he recurred unwisely to his foreign life or letters in conversation with clients or lawyers who knew or cared little about such things, a habit likely to repel those who were intent only on the business in hand, and to make them feel that his mind was not enough on what

most concerned them. Indeed, prudence dictated a greater reserve in this regard with all except intimate friends than he maintained." W. W. Story, then a student in the office of George S. Hillard and Charles Sumner, says: "After the flush of those exciting days abroad, his office and daily occupation seemed dull and gray, and I cannot but think that that changed the whole after course of his life and thought. He did indeed set himself with determination to his work, but it had lost the charm it formerly had and the dreams of those delightful days, and the echoes of those far-away voices haunted his memory. America seemed flat to him after Europe. This, however, slowly passed away, though never to his dying day completely." People often referred to Sumner's "English manner."

An amusing example of his sensitiveness to the American rawness above referred to appears in a letter written by Sumner during the Whig campaign of 1840 to a friend in London. The letter was written on one of the campaign notepapers of the time, and bore as its heading wood-cuts of General William Henry Harrison and a log cabin and cider-barrels. He referred in his letter to "this poor sheet and its pictures," and said: "Our politics are shabby enough. The Whigs, constituting the opposition, have nominated for the Presidency the person whose head adorns a corner of this sheet. He has in his favor his good conduct during the War of 1812 and an alleged victory at Tippecanoe; and the vulgar appeal is made, grounded

on military success. This has made him a more acceptable candidate than Clay or Webster, who have been serving the state well for years. Harrison lives in the State of Ohio, cultivating his farm with his own hands, and as what is called 'help' in that part of the country is not easy to be procured, his wife and daughter cook and serve the dinner for seven or eight people who daily challenge his hospitality. An administration paper alluded to him as living in a log cabin and drinking hard cider. The Whigs at once adopted these words and placed them on their favors. They proclaim Harrison the candidate of the log-cabin and hard-cider class, and this vulgar appeal is made by the party professing a monopoly of the intelligence and education in the country!" This critical note on American political vulgarity might have been by an English visitor to a friend at home.

It is due to Sumner to say that when Harrison died, but one short month after his inauguration, he wrote to Lord Morpeth: "I think you will be struck by the short and simple annunciation of the death of President Harrison by his Cabinet. This was written by Mr. Webster, who is the soul of our government. Harrison died after holding power thirty days, ere the shoes were old in which he had taken the oath of his high office. He was loved much, and the country expected much from him."

But more delightfully familiar foreign correspondence was never sent from Europe by any American than Sumner's letters to his friends at

home. His powers of observation were acute, and he had rare and unusual facilities for accumulating entertaining anecdotes about people now well known in history. For example, he said the Duke of Wellington said of Lord Brougham, "Damned odd fellow—half mad;" while Brougham, who was vexed with the Duke for interfering in British politics, said, "Westminster Abbey is yawning for him." Of Carlyle he wrote: "I heard Carlyle lecture the other day. He seemed like an inspired boy. Truth and thoughts that made one move on the benches came from his apparently unconscious mind couched in the most grotesque style and condensed to a degree of intensity, if I may so write. He is the Zerah Colburn of thought." He met Sir Walter Scott, who did not impress him very pleasantly, and who, as he learned from one of his intimate friends, never saw "fair Melrose aright," because he never did "visit it by the pale moonlight." The truth was, according to Sir David Brewster, that Scott would not go there by night "for fear of *bogles*."

Sumner's first business on arriving in Europe was to acquaint himself with the French language, and his acquisitive powers were demonstrated by the ease with which he mastered "the lingo." He deferred visits to all places of interest and held himself aloof from society until he had overcome the difficulty of speech which he so much deplored. When he arrived in Paris he could hardly understand a single sentence when spoken to him. In less than a month he

could follow a lecturer, and in six weeks he could take his part in conversation, and at the end of three months he served as an interpreter before a local magistrate on the examination of a fellow-countryman. Sumner's mind was active to restlessness, and in his earlier years he threw himself into study with ardor so great as to impair his health and get for him the reputation of being monkish in his habits. He read with a devouring eagerness, but with great discrimination and care. He early mastered the classics, and it is possible that the pedantry of which he was in later years accused, was due to the fact that he absorbed the works of Latin authors with a certain avidity and enthusiasm most unusual. His father was sheriff of Suffolk County, a stern man, and ruling his household with an iron hand. Although the Sumners were of good family and in comfortable circumstances, it is noticeable that when Sumner's father recommended him to a preparatory school where he should be equipped to enter Harvard College, he laid stress upon the necessity that the lad should early earn his own living. After he had been graduated from Harvard he unsuccessfully sought for a subordinate post in the Boston Latin School. Then he taught for three weeks at Brookline, but soon gave up school-teaching, for which he had neither taste nor inclination. At the age of nineteen he composed an essay on Commerce, the subject of a prize competed for by minors, which had been offered by a Boston society, of which Daniel Webster was president. Sumner won

the prize, and Webster, requesting him to come forward, took him by the hand, called him his "young friend," and in kindly words congratulated him on his possible future. The great and godlike Daniel little thought that he was greeting one who should succeed him in the Senate and win enduring fame.

When Sumner was twenty-three years old he had his first sight of the capital of the republic, where his future renown was to be won. His letters to his friends and family from Washington are entertaining, and they bespeak the close observer. This was in 1834, when Webster, Clay, Calhoun, and Benton were in the Senate. Sumner from the gallery looked on, and writing to his father, said: "Mr. Calhoun has spoken today on Mr. Webster's Bank bill. He is no orator; very rugged in his language and studied in style, marching directly to the main points of his subject without stopping for parley or introduction. His speech made a very strong impression upon a very numerous audience." Later on, when the Oregon question was still under discussion, and while Sumner was yet a geat way off from the Senate, he wrote to Lord Morpeth thus: "Calhoun has won what Adams has lost, and I have been not a little pained to be obliged to withdraw my sympathies from the revered champion of freedom and give them to the unhesitating advocate of slavery. Calhoun's course has been wise and able."

Returning to Boston from Washington after his little outing, Sumner tried to take up again

the practice of law, which he did in a certain perfunctory and not enthusiastic manner. It is difficult to think of Sumner as an attorney, arguing about water rights, conveyances, and similar matters, but he was willing to accept the place of a reporter of judicial decisions and to edit law books, which not only shows that he had not enough clients to take up his time, but that he found jurisprudence a more congenial study than books of practice. Regarding Sumner's position in life and literature at this period, one can see that he was, for a little while at least, out of place. He may well have been puzzled to know where lay his true vocation. He was a scholar, an art critic, a student of literature and of history, but to him even politics, in which he afterward found some occupation, were to the last degree distasteful. Pierce says of him: "He was aspiring, his nature sensitive and refined; his imagination had fed upon historic ideals and he had shared the intimacy of the best exemplars among living men. . . . He remembered the promises of youth, and we may believe felt keenly that as yet the performance of mature life had fallen far below them, and he did not see opening before him any path of great usefulness and honor."

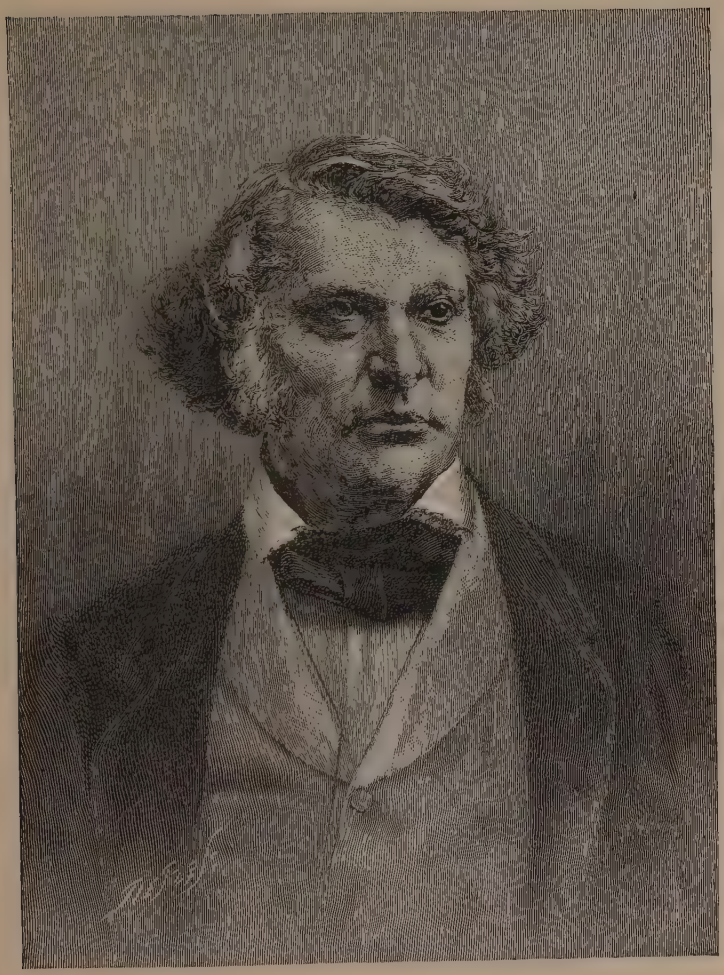
There are those who have believed that Sumner's choice of a career, which involved that bitter crusade against slavery which he subsequently waged, was determined rather deliberately than spontaneously. Many people have thought, and perhaps not unjustly, that Sumner

was an anti-slavery man from sentiment and not from principle. His first high anti-slavery note is in a letter written January 9, 1836, to Dr. Lieber, in Columbia, S. C., in which he says: "You are in the midst of slavery, seated among its whirling eddies, blown around as they are by the blasts of Governor McDuffie fiercer than any from the old wind-bags of Æolus. What think you of it? Should it longer exist? Is not emancipation practicable? We are becoming abolitionists at the North fast. The riots, the attempts to abridge the freedom of discussion, Governor McDuffie's message, and the conduct of the South generally have caused many to think favorably of immediate emancipation who never before inclined to it."

Questions of international law growing out of slavery in the United States supplied topics for discussion in which Sumner engaged with great heartiness. The right of search exercised by the British Government in the suppression of slavery, the validity of a claim to a slave on the high seas or in the ports of foreign powers, and other matters of this sort attracted his attention and engaged his pen. He was not an abolitionist like William Lloyd Garrison and Wendell Phillips, but believed from the first in the ultimate triumph of freedom under the Constitution and by the power of the Union, whereas the abolitionists stigmatized the Constitution of the United States as "a covenant with death and an agreement with hell." Other concerns than those immediately related to the anti-slav-

ery movement enlisted his great and growing powers. The education of the blind and the idiotic, and care for prison discipline, were among the interests that received his active co-operation.

He reached a turning-point in his career when he delivered his Fourth of July oration in Boston, in 1845, choosing for his topic "The True Grandeur of Nations." It was an old-fashioned celebration of Independence Day, the festivities and exercises being under the charge of the city government. Sumner's address, therefore, had a certain official character which gave it importance. The oration was delivered in Faneuil Hall, and was a remarkable occasion. The audience was large, expectation was high, and everybody appeared to apprehend that something was about to happen. Peleg W. Chandler writes of this picture presented in Faneuil Hall: "Sumner's presence as he came forward drew undivided attention. The prominent citizens in the audience had met him in society or in the routine of his profession, and others had noted him on the street, but probably the greater number of his hearers now saw him for the first time. He was then the impersonation of manly beauty and power, of commanding stature, his figure no longer slender, as in student days, but well developed; his features finely cut, his dark hair hanging in masses over his well-formed brow, his face lighting with the smile which always won him friends at first sight. He wore a dress-coat with gilt buttons, a fancy of lawyers at that



Charles Sumner.

period, and white waistcoat and trousers. His gestures were unstudied and followed no rules; the most frequent one was the swinging of the arm above the head. His voice was clear and strong, resounding through the hall, but at times falling in cadences hollow and pathetic. Seldom has there been seen on the platform a more attractive presence than his as now, at the age of thirty-four, he stood for the first time before the people assembled to hear him."

On this occasion the officers, sailors, and marines from a United States man-of-war lying in the harbor, and portions of the State militia in all their glory, were present. Sumner's speech was a plea for peace, and these questions were uttered in the course of his oration: "What is the use of the standing army? What is the use of the navy? What is the use of the fortifications? What is the use of a militia of the United States?" He also employed such phrases as "Farcical discipline;" "Shouldering arms and carrying arms;" "Men closely dressed in padded and well-buttoned coats of blue, besmeared with gold, surmounted by a huge mountain cap of shaggy bearskin." These expressions, naturally enough, angered the authorities and set the tongues of Boston gossips, male and female, wildly wagging. It was an epoch in Sumner's career. The boldness of his utterances, the caustic satire in which he assailed many cherished institutions excited the surprise and sometimes the wrath of conservative, old-fogy Boston. The whole State took up the discussion, and it may safely be said that

the Fourth of July oration of the young orator gave him then more prominence than any previous act of his life.

The Whig party was about dropping into pieces, and Sumner now became one of the leaders of the faction known as "The Young Whigs." He was a member of a State committee appointed in the fall of 1845 and charged with the duty of organizing public opinion against the admission of Texas, then one of the burning topics of the time. The question of annexation, and of the Mexican War, which immediately followed, rent the North into factions. Robert C. Winthrop, a leading Massachusetts Whig, for some time Speaker of the House of Representatives, lent his voice and vote to the prosecution of the war. The Whigs were then contending that they, rather than the Democrats, were disposed to hinder the further extension of slavery. Winthrop's action roused the Young Whigs and Sumner wrote a series of articles, which were published in the Boston newspapers, reprobating Winthrop's vote and criticising him in the bitterest terms. This attack upon Winthrop was furiously resented by Boston "society," in which Mr. Winthrop, as a descendant of one of the early Governors, was a conspicuous figure and was regarded as one of the bluest of the blue-blooded. Society held up its hands in horror at the bare suggestion that a young man like Sumner should dare to criticise the course of conduct of the admirable and admired Winthrop. Doors of many great houses in the modern Athens were

from thenceforth closed against Sumner, and people of Boston's "highest society" said of him: "He is outside of the pale." Sumner doubtless felt keenly this social exclusion, for he had a relish for the tastes, luxury, and refined talk which at that time distinguished the homes in which he had once been welcome, but from which he was now shut out.

The Whigs died hard. The "Silver Grays," as the Conservatives were called, worshipped Webster, and while the disturbances of social and political lines were going on, the godlike Daniel, speaking in Faneuil Hall, said: "Others rely on their foundations and their hopes for the welfare of the country, but for my part, in the dark and troubled night that is upon us, I see no star above the horizon promising light to guide us but the intelligent, patriotic, united Whig party of the United States." Slowly arose from the ruins of the dismembered Whig party the Free Soil organization of 1848. Among these in Boston were Richard H. Dana, Jr., Charles Sumner, Charles Francis Adams, Henry Wilson, Anson Burlingame, E. R. Hoar, John A. Andrew, and others whose names subsequently became famous in the history of the country. It is interesting to note that among the Whigs who spoke in Massachusetts during that time was Abraham Lincoln, then the only Whig member of Congress from Illinois, who had been brought by his party into the State and who spoke at Worcester on the evening before the Whig State Convention, when his arguments were chiefly directed against

the Free Soilers, to whom he objected as being a party of one idea, which was good enough in itself, but not broad enough to build a party on. Webster took the same view, when he said about this time: "No drum-head in the longest day's march was ever more incessantly beaten and smitten than the public sentiment in the North has been every month and day and hour by the din and roll and rub-a-dub of abolition writers and abolition lecturers."

Fire was added to the flames of the anti-slavery excitement by the arrest, in Boston, in April, 1851, of Thomas Sims, a negro, claimed as a fugitive slave from Georgia. The case was taken before a United States commissioner sitting in the Boston Court-House. The building was surrounded with chains to keep off the mob, and amidst great excitement the negro was awarded to his claimant and, surrounded by three hundred armed policemen, was taken to the water-front and put on board a brig bound for Savannah. This incident created the wildest excitement not only throughout New England, but through the North.

Sumner's speech in Faneuil Hall, to which reference was made in the opening paragraph of this chapter, was sometimes called his "Marc Antony speech." It was a bold and vigorous arraignment of the Fugitive Slave law, a denial of its binding force under the Constitution, and was admirably designed to create a public sentiment which would render enforcement of the law impossible. The speech was exceedingly

bitter in its denunciation of the men engaged in the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave law and of those who were in any way instrumental in its enactment. He pleaded for a public opinion that should keep perpetual guard over the liberties of all within the boundaries of Massachusetts. "Nay, more," he said; "like the flaming sword of the cherubim at the gates of Paradise, turning on every side, it shall prevent any slave-hunter from ever setting foot in this commonwealth. Elsewhere he may pursue his human prey, employ his congenial bloodhounds, and exult in his successful game, but into Massachusetts he must not come." Referring to the often-repeated statement that the slavery question was settled, he said: "Yes, *settled, settled*, that is the word. *Nothing, sir, can be settled which is not right;* nothing can be settled which is against freedom; nothing can be settled which is against divine law. God, nature, and all the holy sentiments of the heart repudiate any such false, seeming settlement."

An election for United States Senator from the State of Massachusetts was now impending, and this speech placed Sumner foremost among the Free Soilers as a candidate. The Legislature met early in January, 1851, with Henry Wilson, Free Soiler, President of the Senate, and Nathaniel P. Banks, Jr., Democrat, Speaker of the House. The Free Soilers and the Democrats formed a coalition, under the terms of which the Democrats were to secure the greater part of the State offices, the Governorship being about to be

The Boston Home of Mr. Sumner, at 20 Hancock Street.

filled by the Legislature, and the Free Soilers to be awarded the United States Senator. This agreement naturally roused great wrath among the Whigs, who saw that Webster's place in the United States Senate was to pass out of their control. There was some delay, however, in carrying out the provisions of the covenant, and it was not until after a contest which lasted more than two months that Sumner was finally elected.

Robert Rantoul, Jr., was the candidate of some of the Democrats who held themselves aloof from the coalition. Robert C. Winthrop, who had been appointed by the Governor to fill the temporary vacancy caused by Webster's resigning his seat in the Senate to take a place in the Cabinet of President Fillmore, was the choice of the Whigs. During the long balloting for Senator, there was one day found among the ballots in the box one bearing this eccentric inscription:

"Not a truck-and-dicker coon,
Not a man in the moon;
Get Sumner if you can,
But Rantoul is my man."

If this ballot could have been counted for either Rantoul or Sumner—and both parties claimed it—the election would have been concluded then and there. Its ambiguity made another ballot necessary after a long debate over the possible intention of the voter.

Sumner was sworn in as United States Sena-

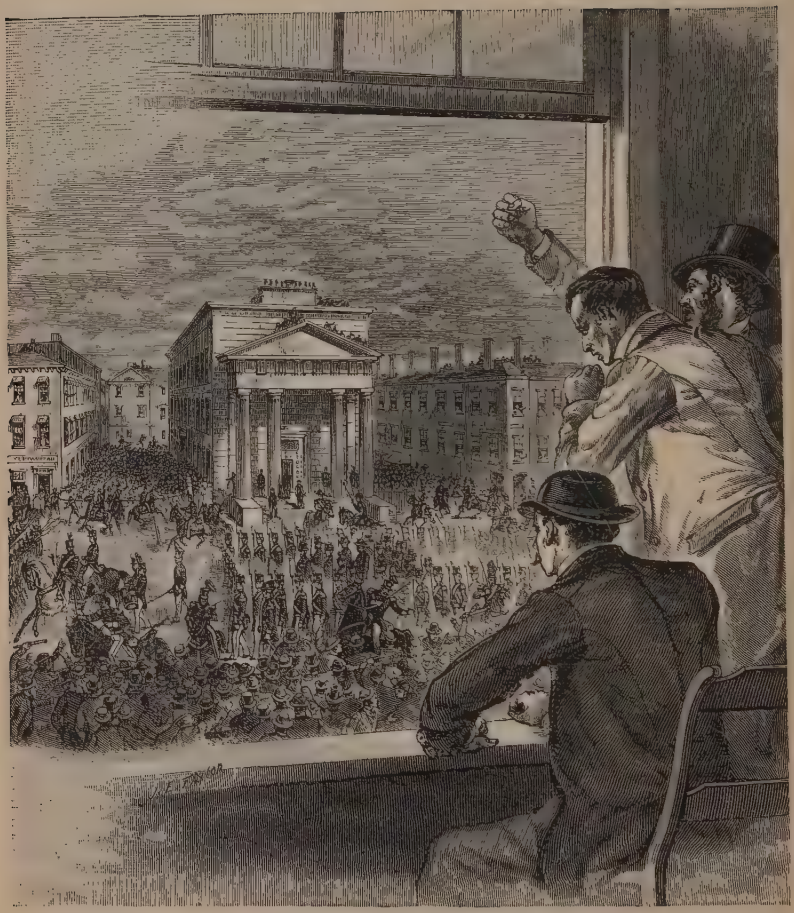
tor, December 1, 1851. His first speech was made on the tenth day of that session on a resolution of welcome to Louis Kossuth, the Hungarian patriot, who had come to this country with a national invitation and was accorded a national reception. Sumner took conservative ground against any action which would seem to be a recognition of the belligerent rights of Hungary. He spoke with discretion, and his position was very generally applauded. His first anti-slavery speech was delivered eight months later, and was a vigorous blast against the Fugitive Slave law, the immediate repeal of which he demanded. Many efforts had been made to prevent him from speaking, but he finally found an opportunity where his address could be made under due provision of parliamentary law; whereupon he delivered a speech of tremendous power which created consternation among the pro-slavery Senators in the Senate and made a profound impression throughout the country. He did not usually join in general debate in the Senate, apparently confining himself for a long time to watching the drift of events, and seldom speaking except on the great subject nearest his heart. Seward, writing to him at this time, said that he hoped that Sumner would seize some practical question and show that he was competent to deal with the general affairs of the government. And Chase, then Governor of Ohio, wrote, advising him "to take off his coat and go into the every-day fight." Sumner's hesitation in this regard, however, did

not pass away until his own party was fully established in power in the United States Congress in 1861. He was systematically excluded from the Standing Committee of the Senate, and was generally regarded as a Catiline, whose presence in the Senate chamber was a menace to the perpetuity of the Union.

His speeches on the Kansas-Nebraska bill, in the early part of 1854, were even more vigorous, powerful, and caustic than those which he delivered against the Fugitive Slave law. The proposition to repeal the Missouri Compromise and leave the friends of freedom and the supporters of slavery to fight it out between themselves in the new Territories aroused his wrath, and he poured out his righteous indignation in a torrent of logic, invective, and historic illustration that amazed and dismayed the pro-slavery men. At last they were faced by an adversary even more bold and aggressive than themselves. These speeches caused a prodigious excitement everywhere, and some of the more feather-headed Southern politicians in Washington actually proposed Sumner's expulsion from the Senate; but this scheme, if it was ever seriously entertained, lacked the support of votes to carry it through and was abandoned. In the course of one of these speeches he said: "In passing such a bill as is now threatened you scatter from this dark, midnight hour no seeds of harmony and good-will, but broadcast through the land dragons' teeth, which happily may not spring up in direful crops of armed men, yet, I

am assured, sir, will fructify in civil strife and feud." By a curious coincidence, almost while this was being delivered in the Senate, Boston was greatly excited by the arrest and rendition of another fugitive slave, one Anthony Burns, claimed by a Virginian planter, and remanded under the orders of the United States commissioner to the custody of the United States marshal. During the excitement a deputy marshal was accidentally killed by a pistol-shot, and there were those who were ready to claim that Sumner's language in the Senate had led to the act which resulted in bloodshed. As a matter of fact, the speech could not have reached Boston until several hours after the fugitive slave had been sent back to slavery.

The rage of the Southerners was great, and was still further inflamed by later speeches on the same subject during the debate over the proposition to throw Kansas and Nebraska open to a contest between slavery and freedom. Out of this great excitement came the assault of Preston S. Brooks upon Senator Sumner. In one of his speeches Sumner had referred to Senator Butler, of South Carolina, with his usual causticity and sarcasm; but during the address he was not called to order for any part of it, either by the President or by any Senator, although he was closely watched to see if any personality could justify a point of order to be raised against him. He sustained himself with great force and emphasis, and with a vigor and richness of diction and felicity of expression that ex-



The Rendition of Anthony Burns.

torted the praise of many who could not sympathize with his views. Preston S. Brooks was a representative from South Carolina, a son of Senator Butler's cousin—a relationship hardly near enough perhaps to call for his volunteering to defend the South Carolina Senator who, among others, had been attacked. A day or two passed after the delivery of the speech in which Butler was so vigorously criticised by Sumner, when Brooks, watching his opportunity, stole into the Senate chamber where Sumner was busily writing at his desk, the Senate not being then in session, and, raising a heavy cane, beat the Senator with great force and rapidity over the head. Sumner fell to the floor senseless and bleeding, unable to extricate himself from the desk where he was sitting, closely engaged.

This assault, from the effects of which Sumner never fully recovered, kindled the North with flames of indignation and caused an intense excitement throughout the country, South and North. Brooks was hailed as a champion of the South, but was denounced by many fair-minded slave-holders, Benton, among others, saying: "This is not an assault, sir, it is a conspiracy; yes, sir, a conspiracy. These men hunt in couples; it is a conspiracy, and the North should know it." A resolution to expel Preston S. Brooks from the House failed of the necessary two-thirds vote, whereupon he resigned his seat, went home, and was re-elected. A few months later he died, and a cenotaph was erected to his memory in the Congressional cemetery at

Washington. Sumner remained on his sick-bed for many weary weeks, and after a magnificent reception in the city of Boston, he went to Europe for health and remained there eight months. He returned for a short visit and again went abroad, remaining this time a year and a half.

The election of Lincoln and the flight of the Southern Senators and Representatives from Washington left the party of Sumner in full possession of both branches of Congress. Sumner was one of the more far-sighted statesmen who saw that war was not only imminent, but likely to be prolonged. He early urged upon the President the policy of emancipating the slaves, and he embraced every occasion to press this upon the President and all others in authority. During the long and tedious struggle that succeeded, he was actively engaged in other matters than those which related directly to the prosecution of the war. In the case of the Trent, from which the Confederate envoys Mason and Slidell had been taken by Captain Wilkes, of the United States man-of-war San Jacinto, Sumner argued that international law required the surrender of the captives; but as the question did not directly require the intervention of the Senate, he contented himself with such private conversation as would be influential in preparing the minds of Congressmen to receive with patience the bitter pill which Secretary Seward's statesmanship subsequently showed to be necessary. The men were given up. From this time forward Sumner was easily the leader of the

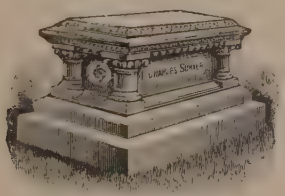
Senate in all matters requiring the genius, learning, and wide information of a statesmen. In foreign affairs he was specially useful, and when the action of France in Mexico, in overturning the republican government of Juarez, and other dangerous complications, engaged the attention of the administration, Sumner's voice and influence were powerful in settling some of the most troublesome questions. In the reconstruction measures that followed the martial subjugation of the rebel States, he did not always agree with the majority of Republican Senators and Representatives.

On June 1, 1865, he was invited by the city of Boston to deliver a eulogy on Lincoln. His address on this important and impressive occasion was somewhat disappointing to his friends. His kindly biographer, Mr. Pierce, says: "The oration was wanting in artistic unity, in parts a sense of due proportion was disregarded, and at the end there was a digression which seriously marred the effect." It was evident that Sumner's attention was rather directed to the policies which he hoped to see carried out by the administration, and not so much to the life and services of the illustrious subject of his eulogy. On the proposition to amend the Constitution of the United States so that it might conform to the changed condition of things brought on by the War of the Rebellion, he also disagreed with some of his associates, and the draft of an amendment which he submitted was rejected by the Senate.

During the controversy of the Senate with President Johnson, Sumner warmly took the part of Secretary Stanton, whom Johnson endeavored to eject from the War Department in violation of law; and the Senator's famous note to the Secretary containing the single word "Stick," when Stanton's removal was threatened, has become almost classic.

During the two terms of President Grant, Sumner was frequently at odds with the administration. He opposed the scheme to acquire additional territory in San Domingo. So frequent were the misunderstandings between the Senator and the President that many people were disposed to regard the removal of Senator Sumner from the Chairmanship of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate, and the recall of his personal friend, Mr. Motley, Minister to England, as the Senator's punishment for having dared to oppose the wishes of the President. It is most likely that this view of a very painful episode in American politics is the correct one. Toward the last of his career Senator Sumner lost some prestige in his own State and throughout the North, in consequence of a resolution which he introduced forbidding that the names of battles of the civil war should be continued in the army register or placed on the regimental colors of the United States. This so-called "battle-flag resolution" was severely condemned in Sumner's own home, and the Massachusetts Legislature passed resolutions of disapproval. These resolutions were subsequently rescinded.

Senator Sumner died in Washington, March, 1874, after a long and painful illness. Although the country had been prepared for the event, his final exit from the stage of life created a profound impression throughout the country, and we may say throughout the civilized world. Orations, eulogies, public resolutions and addresses testified the appreciation of his services and the high estimate in which he was held by the people of the republic. At the time of his death he was past sixty-three years of age, having been

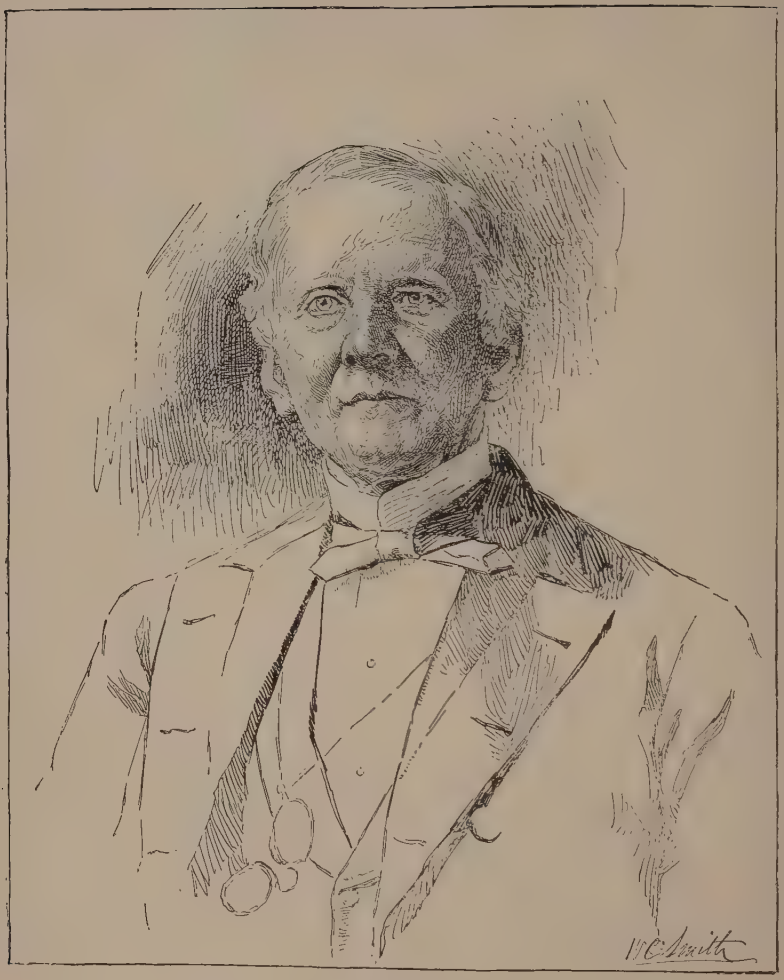


Sumner's Tomb in Mt. Auburn Cemetery, near Boston.

born in January, 1811. He had been Senator continuously for twenty-three years.

In this sketch I have presented such traits of Sumner's character as will enable the reader to form a tolerably intelligent and clear estimate of the man, his worth, his services, and his place in American history. His faults, of which sufficient mention has already been made, were not serious; they were personal and were due to Sumner's strongly marked individuality. In considering his commanding talents, his eminent public services, these defects will sink out of sight and be speedily forgotten. But a man

possessing such immense vital power and so many individual peculiarities cannot be fitly described without some mention of the minor flaws of character that were apparent to those who knew him well. Whether he entered the fight for freedom from the highest motives or not, none will gainsay that the war for the defence of the Union was more vigorously prosecuted and the cause of human liberty more completely successful because of his ardent, consistent, eloquent, and effective championship.



Samuel J. Tilden.

(After a pastel by Sarony in the House at Gramercy Park.)

## XI.

## SAMUEL J. TILDEN.

A YOUNG man who at the age of eighteen should compose a political address directed to the people of the great State of New York, and by this means should break or weaken a powerful party coalition, would be regarded as a model of precociousness; and philosophers, shaking their wise heads over such an example of early manifested genius, would be very likely to predict a barren future for the boy who should begin life with so much apparent maturity of mental power. But this is the way that Samuel J. Tilden started out in a career which certainly was not unfruitful of important results—important to him and to the age and time in which he lived.

This is how it happened: In 1832 there was a hot political contest raging in the State of New York. There were three parties in the field. The anti-Masons, who had been very nearly successful in the contests of previous years, had nominated William Wirt for President; the Democrats had nominated Andrew Jackson and had put up Martin Van Buren as their candidate for Vice-President; and the anti-Jackson men, who were really the Whigs of that day (although not so named, but were called the Nation-

al Republicans), had nominated Henry Clay. New York was the debatable ground in that national campaign. If either two of these three parties should combine and work together, the coalition would carry that State. Such a combination was proposed by the anti-Jackson and the anti-Mason men. The anti-Mason party nominated Francis Granger for Governor and a full ticket of Presidential electors. The anti-Jackson men in their convention adopted and endorsed all these nominations. It was understood that both of these parties would support Granger for Governor, and that the Presidential electors, if chosen, would be divided between Wirt and Clay. The situation was alarming to the Jackson men and was eagerly and anxiously discussed in their households. Martin Van Buren was one of the leading citizens of Columbia County, New York, and a frequent visitor at the home of the Tildens, where the perils of the coalition were considered and debated in the hearing of "Sam," a sharp, bright lad, then scarcely eighteen years old. He was a tall, slender young fellow, with a pale face, mild blue eyes, firm lips, and bright chestnut-colored hair. He lived in an atmosphere of political excitement. Andrew Jackson's fierce and tempestuous public career, his bitter partisan administration, and his unrelenting pursuit of his enemies had filled the land with confusion, and debate ran high. At the country store, around the village forge, by the fireside and on the farm, an intelligent and quick-witted people discussed all sides of the pending politi-

cal questions. Matters that now rest quietly enough in the dusty bins of ancient political history were then full of vital importance to voters who in their turn have passed from the stage of human activity and are no more.

The boy "Sam" Tilden listened attentively to the talk of his elders, and full of the all-important problem—how to break up the coalition of the anti-Masons and the anti-Jackson men, he went into seclusion; asking counsel of nobody, he wrote an elaborate "Address to the People." In this document he appealed by turns to the selfish political instincts of both parties to the coalition, and put the case in a clear, logical, and convincing light, the incongruity of the alliance and the risk incurred in dividing the electoral ticket being especially dwelt upon. Having finished the address, which was pretty long, Samuel submitted it to his father's critical examination. The father listened to the reading with surprise and attention, and although he was secretly pleased with the precocity of the lad, he did not venture to tell him what he really thought of his work. But as Martin Van Buren was then visiting in the town, the elder Tilden resolved to show it to him. Van Buren, to the father's great delight, was so struck with the force and clearness of the address that he advised that it be printed without delay and without making any material change in its text. It was accordingly put forth officially through the columns of an Albany newspaper, where it occupied a half-page. It produced a great effect upon the campaign, and the vanity

of the lad, as we may well suppose, was flattered by the fact that many people were so convinced that Van Buren was the author of the address that that astute politician was obliged publicly to deny that he had written it. The coalition was broken; the Democrats carried the State by nearly ten thousand majority, and anti-Masonry disappeared from the politics of New York.

The young politician was already fitted for college, and in the following year, 1833, he entered Yale, where he was long remembered as a studious young undergraduate—good-natured, but diffident and shy. His close application to study impaired his health, and at the end of the year he was obliged to return home. On his recovery it was decided for him that his academic course should be continued and finished at the University of the City of New York, whither he went, and where just before he graduated he won a second success as a writer on public affairs. This work was a review of the political situation of the time, with special reference to the question of the independent treasury then agitating the people of the United States. Van Buren was now President, and the consequences of the financial policy pursued by Jackson during his second term were a widespread depression in business and general suspension of the banks. The government deposits had been removed from the United States Bank and placed in the State banks, many of which were in the city of New York. This money had been freely used for discount and speculative purposes, and after a

series of financial disorders, the money panic of 1837 swept so swiftly through the land that business was paralyzed and a general stagnation of commerce ensued. President Van Buren called Congress together in special session and set before that body the financial condition of the government. His principal recommendation was that the treasury of the people should be kept by the officers of the government and should be entirely separated from the business and concerns of the banks. The President's recommendations were very hotly discussed in New York and elsewhere, and Tilden, now twenty-three years old, plunged into the discussion in a series of papers which were written in admirable style and evinced a thorough knowledge of governmental affairs, political economy, law, and finance. These papers, which created a profound impression at the time they first appeared, were sufficiently mature in their judgment and literary style to be included in the collection of the writings and speeches of Tilden which has been made since his death.

He also appeared in politics, more conspicuously, perhaps, when, in 1838, there was organized in the Democratic party, to which the Tilden family adhered, a diversion in favor of William H. Seward, who had just been nominated by the Whigs as their candidate for Governor against Marcy, who was the nominee of the Democrats. United States Senator Tallmadge, of New York, was at the head of this movement, and being in Columbia County, speaking in behalf of the

"bolters," he was greatly surprised by the appearance of young Tilden, who, in default of any other speaker, mounted the platform at a public meeting, and with such skill and familiarity with public questions combated the views which had been proposed by Senator Tallmadge. This somewhat dramatic appearance of the young man in active politics gave him great vogue at

The Tilden Homestead, where Mr. Tilden was Born, at New Lebanon, N. Y.

the time and was long afterward remembered as one of the most striking incidents of the campaign, which resulted in the election of William H. Seward.

When Tilden had completed his academic course and had passed through the Law School of the New York University he became more than ever engrossed in politics, and in 1840 he prepared an elaborate speech, which he delivered in his native town, New Lebanon, N. Y.,

in October of that year. The subject of this speech, which was "Currency, Prices, and Wages," affords a very good clew to the character of Tilden's subsequent career. He was always a close student of political economy, and as soon as he had begun to read anything above the ordinary range of boys' books, he tackled with remarkable courage the writings of the great publicists of this and other countries. He not only mastered the details of the financial systems of the United States, but grappled successfully with the general principles of finance as applied to the governments of the world. His speech at New Lebanon contained, among other things, a history of the United States Bank, which is of sufficient historical value to make it acceptable, even to this day, as a lucid and accurate statement of the bearings of that great question in the politics of the middle of this century.

Tilden was admitted to the Bar in 1841, and opened an office for the practice of his profession in the city of New York. His clients were not very numerous, and he turned his attention to the management of a political newspaper enterprise which was now proposed by some of the leading men of the Democratic party. He became editor of the *Morning News*, a successful political newspaper, which supported the nomination of James K. Polk in 1844, and was active in the canvass of that year. He particularly devoted himself to the cause of the workingmen, and threw himself with great animation into an attempt to defeat the scheme of the

Whigs, who had expected to divide the vote of the State, so that Clay would carry it by a plurality and thus secure his election. Polk carried New York by a plurality of a little over five thousand, and Silas Wright was elected Governor over Millard Fillmore, the Whig candidate. After the election, Tilden closed his career as an editor and returned to the practice of law. In the following year he was elected a member of the Assembly, where he devoted himself to the discussion of questions relating to finance, the reduction of taxes, and the enlargement of personal liberty.

When the war between the United States and Mexico was declared, in 1846, he favored the joint resolution supporting the war policy of the Polk administration and voted for an appropriation to enroll a New York military contingent. In the Constitutional Convention of 1846, of which he was a member, he played a distinguished part, his activities being specially directed to such constitutional provisions as should guard with greater safety the public treasury and maintain the credit of the State. The amendments which he proposed on these subjects were of Spartan severity, and if they had all been adopted, they would have undoubtedly made the financial system of the State of New York much more nearly perfect than it is.

One of the early triumphs of Mr. Tilden was achieved in what is known as the Flagg case, and in this and in two or three subsequent causes in which he distinguished himself, the character

of the man's mind evinced itself. The Flagg case grew out of an election contest between Azariah C. Flagg and his competitor, Mr. Giles, for the office of Comptroller of New York City. The majority of Mr. Flagg was one hundred and seventy-nine, and a contest arose over the counting of the returns. A portion of the tallies in the poll were not forthcoming when the case came to trial in the courts, but Tilden, by a curious process of reconstructing and analyzing the tallies already in possession of the court, succeeded in establishing as nearly as possible the identity of the missing tallies; and by this process of reconstruction he convinced the court that all of the combinations which he laid before it made a methodical demonstration in favor of Flagg. In effect he placed in the hands of the court and jury printed copies of his reconstructed tallies and of all the regular tickets, and going over them step by step he was enabled to demonstrate to the complete satisfaction of all impartial observers that his case was impregnable. The jury returned a verdict in favor of Tilden's client. Another case somewhat similar which evinced great legal skill in its management was the famous Cunningham-Burdell case. This was a cause growing out of the murder of Dr. Harvey Burdell, and a suit brought by his alleged wife, a Mrs. Cunningham, to recover a greater portion of the estate of the deceased man. The case was one in which great interest was felt all over the country on account of the mystery which surrounded the death of Burdell;

and the astute lawyer who managed the case against the Cunningham claimant gained great renown not only on account of the notoriety of the case itself, but by the happy combination of qualities which he exhibited in his management of the case. A somewhat similar cause in which he figured with great credit was that of the Delaware & Hudson Canal Company against the Pennsylvania Coal Company. This required the exercise of the same variety of talent as that employed in unravelling the mysteries and intricacies of the before-mentioned suits. The point at issue in this case was, whether the enlargement of the canal had rendered transportation cheaper than it had been before its enlargement. By a series of computations and conclusions, drawn from the books of the canal company, Tilden with methodical precision, established a complete defence for the coal company. The system which he pursued was a combination of skilfulness and ingenuity, and the case, which was a novelty in its time, is referred to as one in which novel principles and entirely original methods of procedure were adopted. His tables, which were marvels of methodical elaborateness, became a species of technical standard in matters of this kind. Commenting on this case long afterward, Tilden said: "I remember an anecdote which ex-President Van Buren once told me of John Randolph. Somebody was speaking to him in a complimentary vein in reference to a debate in the House of Representatives, and told him that a speech of

Mr. Tilden's New York House, at No. 15 Gramercy Park.

his had not been answered. 'Answered, sir,' said he; 'it was not made to be answered.' And so, sir, these tables were not made to be confuted. They are made according to the best process of scientific analysis, proved step by step from the records of the plaintiffs themselves, and are introduced here in strict conformity of the rules of evidence." Tilden showed that the coal company, instead of reaping an advantage from the enlargement of the canal, had suffered loss. The verdict accordingly was rendered in favor of his clients.

From this time Tilden's career as a lawyer was largely devoted to rescuing corporations from unprofitable and embarrassing litigation, in reorganizing their administration, in re-establishing their credit, and in rendering their resources available. One of his biographers has said: "Since the year 1855, it is safe to say that more than half the great railway corporations North of the Ohio and between the Hudson and Missouri Rivers were at some time his clients. . . . It was here that his legal attainments, his unsurpassed skill as a financier, his unlimited capacity for concentrated labor, and his constantly increasing weight of character and personal influence found full activity." In other words, Mr. Tilden now became what is commonly known as "a railroad lawyer," and he laid not only the foundation for notable professional success, but also of a large fortune which he accumulated during the years ensuing.

The legal work by which Tilden will longest

be remembered undoubtedly was his service in tracing out and exposing the frauds of the so-called "Tammany Ring" that ruled in New York during the years from 1869 to 1871. By a series of political manœuvres this combination of political adventurers had secured a position in the government of the city of New York that seemed to be utterly unassailable. The so-called Tweed charter of the city gave these men, at the head of whom was William M. Tweed, full power over the finances—receipts and expenditures—of the great metropolis. At a single meeting of the Board of Special Audit, for example, three men made the order for the payment of $6,312,500, of which scarcely ten per cent. in value was realized by the city of New York. As time advanced, the percentages of theft mixed in these bills, which were audited and paid under the direction of the members of the Tweed ring, grew in amount. In 1870 the theft was sixty-six per cent., and a little later it was eighty-five per cent. The aggregate of fraudulent bills after April 5, 1870, and during the rest of that year, was $12,250,000; in 1874 it was $3,400,000. Nearly $15,750,000 of fraudulent bills were comprised in the booty grasped on a single day. So complete was the power of this corrupt combination under the laws of the State, that Mr. Tilden, in one of his famous papers on the Tweed ring, said that the act of the Legislature might have run in this way: "We, the people of the State of New York, represented in Senate

and Assembly, do by our supreme legislative authority hereby grant William M. Tweed the office of Commissioner of Public Works, and annex thereto, in addition to the powers heretofore held by the Street Commissioner, all the powers heretofore held by the various officers of the Croton Department, to have and to hold the same for four years, with the privilege of extending the term by surrendering any remnant thereof and receiving a reappointment for a further new term of four years, which office shall be free and discharged of the power of the Governor to remove for cause on charges, as in the case of sheriffs, and every power of removal by the city government; and absolutely of all accountability whatsoever, unless Mayor Hall or some successor shall choose to prefer articles of impeachment to the Court of Common Pleas, and unless all six judges shall attend to try such articles." This was exactly the operation of the act conferring on the city of New York the famous so-called Tweed charter.

The secret accounts of the ring were published in one of the newspapers of the day at the instance of one of the political associates of Tweed and his fellow conspirators. This exposure, which created great excitement throughout New York, and indeed throughout the whole country, was followed up by a combination of good citizens, at whose instance the work of further unravelling the frauds and bringing the offenders to justice was vigorously prosecuted. Mr. Tilden's chief contribution to the

good work was an investigation of the methods by which the conspirators divided among themselves the proceeds of their thefts. By obtaining from one of the banks, under due process of law, the checks which had passed through that institution, and comparing them with the accounts in the Comptroller's office, Tilden managed to expose with convincing lucidity of proof the details of the conspiracy. All of these details were laid bare with consummate ingenuity and with a clearness of statement which left no doubt of their accuracy and genuineness. By the information which he obtained from the banking institution before referred to, he established the fact that but one-third of the nominal amount of the bills audited by the city government had ever reached the persons who pretended to be entitled to the payments, and that two-thirds of this great amount had been divided among public officers and their accomplices, and he traced the dividends into the actual possession of some of the accused parties. He thus converted a strong suspicion into mathematical certainty and furnished judicial proof against the guilty parties. In process of time the ring was broken, its power was utterly destroyed, and the chief conspirator, after having been brought back a fugitive from a foreign land, was sentenced to jail, where he died miserably.

During the entire period of the wicked ascendency of the Tweed ring Tilden had been continued as Chairman of the State Democratic Committee, but he did not share in its corrupt

Mr. Tilden's Library in the Gramercy Park House.

councils, and he was kept ignorant of its audacious schemes. There was no bond of sympathy between him and the vulgar creatures who had taken possession of the government of the city of New York, and when he had succeeded in the work of capturing the stronghold of the Tweed ring, he entered the Assembly of the State as a member and engaged in the work of repealing the laws that gave to this conspiracy its power, and in purging the statute books of all legislation that had been framed to enable the adventurers to carry on their nefarious schemes.

It is fair to presume that it was at this time that Tilden conceived the ambition of becoming President of the United States. His popularity and repute as a reformer and as an exterminator of gross political abuses were now very thoroughly established. His name was in the mouths of all men, and he had contrived without apparent injustice to others to secure for himself great credit of the entire work of overthrowing one of the most powerful and apparently impregnable political combinations ever made in this country. This was his opportunity. The Governorship to which he was elected in 1874 became a stepping-stone to secure the nomination of his party in 1876. His name was identified with administrative reform, and his political methods were those of a complete and wellnigh perfect organization. His inaugural address as Governor was devoted to questions of political economy, and one of the earliest acts of his administration was to attack the "Canal Ring." This was another

combination by which the grossest abuses in the management of the Erie and Champlain Canals had long been maintained. By a system of false accounts and prodigal expenditures the managers of the ring had robbed the State and oppressed its internal commerce. Tilden's vigorous efforts in the overthrow of this corrupt combination reclaimed a great sum of money from the conspirators and readjusted the whole scheme and policy of canal management. His public administration, therefore, had been signalized by the overthrow of the Tweed ring and the Canal ring, and a decrease of the tax budget of the State of New York by nearly one-half. His position in 1876 was most fortunate. He was virtually master of the Democratic party, then ascendant in his State, and had gained a national reputation for honesty and administrative ability which was certainly not surpassed by any statesman of his time. Although there was a vigorous opposition organized against his nomination by the national convention of his party, he succeeded in carrying off the honors, and was the accepted and accredited candidate of his party that year, being opposed by Rutherford B. Hayes, the Republican nominee.

It was generally supposed that the votes of the States recently in rebellion could be safely counted on to vote for Tilden, but when the returns were made up it was found that South Carolina, Louisiana, and Florida were included in the list of States claimed by the Republicans. The colored people in those three States were

naturally regarded as secure for the Republican candidate. The white population of South Carolina was only two hundred and eighty-nine thousand, while the colored population was four hundred and fifteen thousand, and the disparity of the white and colored races in the three States above named, it was claimed, justified the belief that the returns as made out by the election officers were trustworthy. Both parties persisted in claiming a victory in the three States, and the confidence of the leaders inflamed the excitement of the masses of voters. A long contest ensued in each of these States, and representatives of the two parties proceeded in hot haste to the respective capitals of the States in order to see that "a fair count" was had. So great was the excitement throughout the country that General Grant, who was then President, felt constrained to send to General Sherman, who commanded the army of the United States, this memorable despatch: "Instruct General Augur, in Louisiana, and General Ruger, in Florida, to be vigilant with the force at their command, to preserve peace and good order, and to see that the proper and legal boards of canvassers are unmolested in the performance of their duties. Should there be any grounds of suspicion of a fraudulent count on either side it should be reported and denounced at once. No man worthy of the office of President should be willing to hold it if counted in or placed there by fraud. Either party can afford to be disappointed in the result; the country

cannot afford to have the result tainted by the suspicion of illegal or false returns."

The final result of the contests in the three States, as determined by the canvassing boards, gave the electoral votes in each one of them to Hayes, and later in November, 1876, when the electors met in the several States, the count from all the States of the Union showed one hundred and eighty-five electors for Hayes and one hundred and eighty-four for Tilden. The Democrats had hoped up to the last that at least some one of the States, or possibly one of the electors in one of the three States, would be returned for Tilden, and when they found that every vote of the three States was counted for Hayes, their anger was intense. Threats were made that General Hayes should never be inaugurated as President of the United States, and a fierce excitement swept over the country. As the time drew near when the electoral votes should be counted by Congress in joint session of both Houses, this excitement became deeper and more strained. Under the existing law it was directed that "No electoral vote objected to shall be counted, except by the concurrent votes of the two Houses." At this time the House of Representatives had a Democratic majority and the Senate had a Republican majority. It was obvious that either of the two Houses could prevent the counting of an electoral vote. Accordingly, after a long and heated discussion, a bill was passed by both Houses providing for the creation of an Electoral Commission, to which

Greystone, Mr. Tilden's Country Place, near Yonkers, N. Y.

body all the questions in dispute should be referred. This commission was to be composed of five members of the Senate, five members of the House, and five Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States. This Electoral Commission was finally organized on the thirty-first day of January, 1877, and was composed as follows: Nathan Clifford, Samuel F. Miller, Stephen J. Field, William Strong, Joseph P. Bradley, Justices of the Supreme Court; George F. Edmunds, Oliver P. Morton, Frederick T. Frelinghuysen, Thomas F. Bayard, Allen G. Thurman, United States Senators; Henry B. Payne, Eppa Hunton, Josiah G. Abbott, James A. Garfield, and George F. Hoar, Representatives in Congress—eight Republicans and seven Democrats. It had been generally supposed that the fifth justice selected for this commission would be David Davis, of Illinois, then a Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. Judge Davis was classed as an Independent, although there was an impression abroad that he would cast his vote in favor of Tilden. By a singular combination of circumstances he was not able to serve on the commission, having at that juncture been elected United States Senator from the State of Illinois. His place was taken by Justice Bradley, of New Jersey, who served on the commission. The result of a long, laborious, and absorbingly interesting contest before the commission was a decision in favor of General Hayes by a vote of eight to seven, and the finding of the commission was finally confirmed.

Other complications arose in this contest in consequence of the failure of the Presidential electors from the State of Oregon to present a unanimous report. This point was also decided in favor of General Hayes by the Electoral Commission, before which body it came.

An unpleasant sequel to this most unfortunate dispute was the production of a series of cipher despatches which had passed between the friends of Mr. Tilden during the exciting period of the count in the winter of 1876–7. These despatches had been brought into the custody of a committee of the United States Senate by subpœnas and were finally unravelled by an expert, and the controversy, which had been reopened by Tilden's friends, became even more acrimonious than before. The investigation which followed showed that the friends of Tilden had been engaged in an effort, which proved abortive, to use money corruptly to influence the action of returning boards or to secure the votes of Presidential electors in some of the States where contests were made. Tilden appeared before the committee of investigation and swore that he knew nothing of any of these telegrams, and that when he was informed of certain negotiations in South Carolina he had stopped them. He emphatically declared that he scorned to defend his title by such means as were employed to secure a felonious possession.

Probably the actual merits of this most unhappy controversy will not be satisfactorily adjusted during the lifetime of the present gen-

eration of men. Commenting on the final outcome of this deplorable business, Blaine in his "Twenty Years in Congress" says: "The interest throughout the investigation centred upon Mr. Tilden, and concerning him and his course there followed general discussion, angry accusation, and warm defence. There is nothing in the testimony to contradict the oath taken by Mr. Tilden, and there has been no desire to fasten a guilty responsibility upon him. But the simple fact remains, that a Presidential canvass which began with a ponderous manifesto in favor of reform in every department of the government, and which accused those who had been intrusted with power for sixteen years of every form of dishonesty and corruption, ended with a persistent and shameless effort to bribe the electors of three States." But no biographical sketch of Tilden would be complete unless it insisted, as Blaine has insisted, that there has been no serious attempt to fasten upon his character any accusation of complicity in the corrupt efforts made to put him into the Presidency.

Mr. Tilden died at his country place, August 4, 1886.

The model for Tilden's political career was Martin Van Buren, whom he admired for his many talents and respected for his private worth. As a lad Tilden became well acquainted with Van Buren and his family, and as he advanced to mature years he was admitted to the intimacy and confidence of the "Sage of Kinderhook," as Van Buren was familiarly called by

Bryant Park, Fifth Avenue and Forty-second Street, New York, and the Suggested Tilden Library.

his admiring neighbors. Van Buren was a master of political strategy, and in the history of American politics he stands without a rival as a manager of men. Tilden was adroit, ingenious, and cautious. He was skilful in planning and strong in execution, and he inspired his party with a courage and energy which up to the time of his becoming its natural leader it had failed to evince. Although Tilden was during the greater part of his life immersed in active politics, his tastes were scholarly and refined. He was a high authority in bibliography and was a zealous and untiring collector of books and manuscripts relating to American history. His house, which in later years became an abode of elegant leisure, was stored with rich treasures of art and literature. In everything that pertained to American history and to the advancement of American interests Tilden was an enthusiastic and devoted patriot. His manner in social intercourse was variable. At times he was mysterious and secretive and at other times cordial and frank to the last degree. Probably very few persons were admitted to his closest intimacy, and he died as he lived, without acquiring any permanent hold on the affections of the whole people. By the terms of his will the bulk of a fortune of several millions was bequeathed to the city of New York for the building and maintenance of a great public library. By an unfortunate judicial construction of the terms of this will the greater part of his princely benefaction was diverted to the uses of collateral heirs of the Tilden estate.

James G. Blaine.

## X.

## JAMES G. BLAINE.

We have seen how the precocious promise of the youth of one statesman, Samuel J. Tilden, was amply fulfilled in his maturer years. But the historian will say that this was an exception to a general rule. Brilliant men have not usually evinced much of their brightness in their boyhood. There is great hope for the dull boy, after all. James G. Blaine, if not a boy of very commonplace traits of mental character, certainly was not a lad of remarkable promise. When he was a student at Washington College, in Western Pennsylvania, one who knew him well said of him that "he was a plain, quiet, good-tempered, studious boy," remarkable for nothing but his love of reading, and giving no hint of the greatness of his future career as a statesman. One of his college mates has said of him: "I knew Blaine at Washington College, he being in the next class below me. Blaine's parents lived at Washington during their son's college course, and on that account the students saw less of 'Jim' Blaine, as he was familiarly called, than if he had boarded at the college instead of at home. Young Blaine was a sturdy, heavy-set, matter-of-fact looking young fellow, not at all prepossess-

ing in appearance, and exceedingly awkward at times, and giving no hint of the elegant gentleman he has grown to be. He was never seen on the street or play-ground, and rarely mingled in the customary sports of the boys. I remember we had a very fine foot-ball ground, but I never remember to have seen young Blaine on it. In fact, I cannot say for certain that I ever saw him engaged in any kind of sport during the entire time I was at college. It is my impression that he passed all his leisure at home or in one of the college halls or with a book. He was a great reader, almost a book-worm, and would become absorbed to a wonderful degree in his books."

The bent of his mind, so far as it was manifested at all, was in the direction of newspaper writing. In his graduation address, delivered in September, 1848, when he was in the eighteenth year of his age, he devoted himself to "The Duty of an Educated American." Texas had just been annexed to the United States, and gold had just been discovered in California. The budding young statesman said: "The sphere of labor for the educated American is continually enlarging. But recently we added the vast dominion of the Lone Star Republic to our glorious Union. The war to which that act gave rise is now in victorious progress, and will not end without another great accession to our territory, possibly carrying our flag beyond the Great American Desert to the shores of the Pacific sea. Where our armies march, population follows; and the full duty for the scholar is to be continental in ex-

tent and as varied as the domains of a progressive civilization." It will be observed that the youthful orator took no part in the discussion that then raged among his elders as to the righteousness or injustice of the annexation of Texas and the war which it provoked.

After graduation, Blaine found employment as a professor of mathematics in a military school at Blue Lick Springs, Ky., where about two hundred young students, sons of the planters of the South, were pupils. These lads were of a class hard to govern, and early in his connection with the school there was a rebellion against the faculty. Some of the students attacked the professors with pistols and knives, but Blaine, who was conspicuous in this fight at the head of the faculty, used only his fists and arms, and his party finally triumphed in the fight, and Blaine won from the young Southerners more respect on account of his having been the hero of the struggle than if he had been only the accomplished professor that he was.

In the third year of his professorship at Blue Lick, having married Miss Harriet Stanwood, of Maine, he went to her native State, where he tarried for a time; then returned to Pennsylvania and taught in the Philadelphia Blind Asylum. But from 1854 onward he was wholly identified with Maine, having taken up his residence at Augusta, the capital of that State. He became part owner and editor-in-chief of the *Kennebec Journal*, and entered upon a career of active politics and journalism. It is interesting to note

here that early in his editorial work Blaine evinced his high admiration for Henry Clay, who, as everybody now knows, was the pattern and exemplar of the life and career of the future "Man from Maine." Blaine was always pleased when a parallel in his and Clay's public life was found, and he never disguised the ardent admiration which Clay's character and services inspired in him. In his newspaper, very soon after he took charge of it, Blaine said: "As a speaker, Mr. Clay is very earnest and persuasive; not polished either in manner or diction, but still irresistibly pleasing. He speaks from the soul, and the moment you hear him you are assured that he gives utterance only to what he knows and feels to be the truth and the cause of human freedom."

Blaine's first public address was made with much diffidence, because he had not been successful as a debater in the literary society of his college, had had no experience, and was nervous and easily embarrassed, and his speech was hindered by a slight impediment. He had attended the first national convention of the Republican party, which was held at Philadelphia in 1856, and on his return he was asked to address a meeting of his fellow Republicans in Augusta, to tell them the story of the convention's doings. When he became accustomed to the sound of his voice, and the friendly audience before him encouraged him by their sympathetic applause, he was emboldened to make what was said to be a very creditable speech. A more important

address, however, was delivered at a Republican meeting in Litchfield, Me., during the following month. This speech was carefully prepared and committed to memory and was notable for its conservatism and for the moderation of statement which characterized it.

He was actively engaged in the political campaign of 1856, when Fremont was the Republican candidate for the Presidency; and in 1858 he was

The Birthplace of Mr. Blaine at West Brownsville, Pa.

elected for the first time in his life to a political office, being a member of the Assembly of the Maine Legislature. He now devoted himself to a careful and exhaustive study of the rules of parliamentary usage and the manual of debate. He was an assiduous student of all public questions and was master of the methods of procedure in legislative bodies, not, as many have supposed, by reason of his powers of intuition, but by a diligent study of rules, precedents,

and historical examples. These acquisitions of knowledge formed the basis of his election as Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Maine Legislature two years later. He served two terms, and his training in the Legislature as member and presiding officer fitted him for the honor which was still later conferred upon him by the national House of Representatives.

His studies continued to be ardent, and he spent his nights in storing his mind with useful political knowledge and in almost committing to memory the political history not only of his adopted State, but of all the other States of the Union. One of his first speeches of general and national interest was on a proposition in Congress favoring the purchase of Cuba by the United States. In a speech before the Legislature, where the question was incidentally brought up, he said: "The proposition to place thirty millions of dollars at the disposal of the President, and to run the nation in debt for the purpose of raising the money; to surrender to him the power to make treaties, annex Territories and States; to create him absolute dictator, with the purse of the nation in one hand and the sword in the other; to have peace or war, prosperity or misfortune follow at his will or to be decided by his errors—such a proposition, I say, is too monstrous to be entertained for one moment by anyone who values the preservation of constitutional rights and the perpetuity of a republican union."

Although Blaine was not born in the State

with which his name is so indissolubly connected, the people of that region have never apparently regarded him other than as one of themselves. His glory is their glory, and his fame is their own. Writing of him in later years, Governor Edward Kent said: "Before he was twenty-nine he was chosen chairman of the executive committee of the Republican organization in Maine, a position from which he shaped and directed political matters in the State, leading his party to brilliant victory. Had Mr. Blaine been New England born he would probably not have received such rapid advancement at so early an age, even with the same ability that he possessed; but there was a sort of Western dash about him that took with us Down-Easters—an expression of frankness, candor, and confidence that gave him from the start a very strong and permanent hold on our people, and as the foundation of all, pure character and a masterly ability equal to all demands made upon him."

The most notable speech made by Blaine during his term of service in the Legislature was on the war power of Congress as involved in the question of confiscation of rebel property. He took the Lincoln view of the power of the nation and approved unqualifiedly President Lincoln's propositions regarding the question of confiscation. In his devotion to the Republican cause, Blaine went to the Chicago convention as a delegate in 1860. He had pledged himself to the Lincoln interest and refused to be won over to the Seward column, although a number of the

Maine delegates supported the cause of Seward. Earlier than this, when Lincoln and Douglas were having their memorable oratorical contest for the Senatorship in 1858, Blaine was on the scene with his pen describing the wonderful debate for his little newspaper in Augusta, Me.

Mr. Blaine at Thirty Years of Age.

In one of his letters he ventured the prediction that Lincoln would be defeated for Senator by Douglas, but would beat Douglas for President in 1860. This letter was copied from the *Kennebec Journal* into several Illinois papers friendly to Lincoln, and Lincoln himself cut it out and carried it in his pocket-book until long after he

was inaugurated President. When Lincoln and Blaine met in Washington, after the election of the Maine man to the House of Representatives, their friendship became at once strong, and it lasted with the life of the great President.

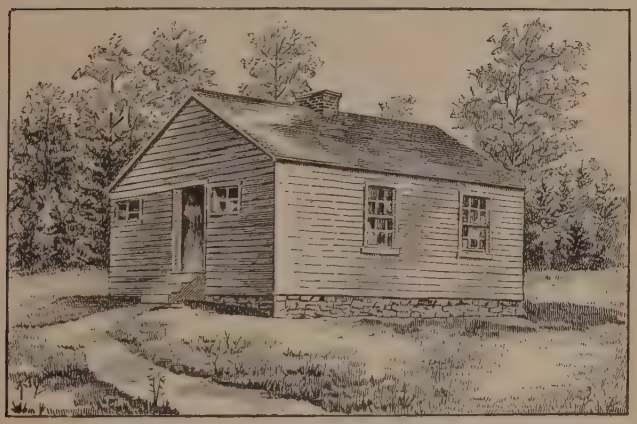
Blaine was elected to the Thirty-eighth Congress in 1862, succeeding Anson P. Morrill. Among the prominent men in the House at that time were Henry Winter Davis, of Maryland; John A. Bingham and Samuel Shellaberger, of Ohio; General Schenck, of Ohio; Thaddeus Stevens, of Pennsylvania, and James A. Garfield, of Ohio. When Blaine was sworn in by the Speaker of the House, Garfield, who was to become his most intimate friend in Congress, stood upon his right and William B. Allison, of Ohio, on his left. This was the beginning of one of the most notable terms of Congressional service which has been enjoyed by any American. He was seven times elected to Congress, making fourteen years in all, and was elected by the House three times Speaker, making his service in the chair six years.

His first speech in Congress was during the spring succeeding the beginning of his term in the House, when he made an elaborate address on the subject, "Can the Country Sustain the Expenses of the War and Pay the Debt which it will involve?" It is needless to say that Blaine boldly advocated the assumption by the National Government of all the debts incurred by the States in the prosecution of the war. His speech was a business-like statement of the finan-

cial condition of the government, its resources, and its pecuniary liabilities and possibilities. It was a model of clearness and strength and was admirably calculated to restore public confidence and strengthen the faith of the people in the ability of the National Government to prosecute the war to its end and to adjust satisfactorily the burdens of taxation which the great debts incurred would make necessary. At that time there were many timid souls who apparently dreaded bankruptcy more than they feared the dissolution of the Union. Blaine was one of the more courageous statesmen who, while he believed in the righteousness of the cause of the country, never for one moment doubted its ability to carry on the war, sustained as it would be by the patriotism of the people. He showed that even this great national debt, which he estimated at three thousand millions of dollars, could be easily borne by the country, and was not greater in proportion than the debt assumed by our government at the time it was founded in 1779. His historical parallel was a striking one, and by quoting from Jefferson's estimates of the financial carrying capacity of the people in 1779, he argued that the republic of this later time was even more competent to bear its burden than it was at the close of the War of the Revolution.

This speech, which was circulated by hundreds of thousands of copies throughout the United States, concluded with these memorable sentences: "These are the great elements of

material progress, and they comprehend the entire circle of human enterprise, agriculture, commerce, manufacture, mining. They assure to us an increase in property and population that will surpass the most sanguine deductions of our census tables, framed as those tables are upon the ratios and relations of our workers in the past; they give into our hands, under



Where Mr. Blaine went to School at West Brownsville, Pa.

the blessing of Almighty God, the power to command our fate as a nation; they hold out to us the grandest future reserved for any people, and with this promise they teach us the lesson of patience and render confidence and fortitude a duty. With such amplitude and affluence of resources, and with such a vast stake at issue, we should be unworthy of our lineage and inheritance if we for one moment mistrusted our ability to maintain ourselves a

united people with one country, one constitution, one destiny."

Blaine contented himself, however, during his first term in Congress with speaking briefly on a variety of important measures, including those for the adjustment of the revenue, tariff for protection of American industries, a law in reference to fugitive slaves, and other similar subjects. But his remarks on these questions, while they were short, were always pungent, crisp, and full of information. It may be truly said of him that he never spoke without an absolute and full comprehension of his subject, whatever it might be.

He was a "hard-money" man, and during a debate on an act of Congress proposed to prevent the depreciation of greenbacks and the appreciation of gold, he said: "This whole bill aims at what is simply impossible. You cannot by Congressional enactment make a coined dollar worth less than it is, nor a paper dollar worth more than it is. I think we had experience enough in that direction with the famous gold bill at the last session. . . . The bill under consideration has already had a most pernicious effect, and should it become a law no man can measure the degree of its hurtful influence." Although the bill had the powerful support of Thaddeus Stevens, who was the chairman of the House Committee of Ways and Means, it was soon after withdrawn, as the arguments against it were too powerful for its friends to overcome. Reconstruction measures naturally engaged

much attention in Congress at this time, and Blaine's attitude on some of the great questions which came up from time to time was consistent, manly, and patriotic. He insisted that the basis of representation should be so arranged that the newly enfranchised negroes of the Southern States should not be deprived of their rights, and that the representation of those States should be diminished just so far as the right of suffrage was curtailed by law or by usage.

During the long session of the Thirty-ninth Congress, in 1866, occurred the celebrated Blaine-Conkling episode which resulted in the life-long estrangement of these two eminent men. Conkling was an educated lawyer, imperious in his manner and impatient of opposition. General James B. Fry, who had been a provost-marshal-general in the State of New York during the war, was violently assailed by Representative Conkling in the course of debate in the House. Blaine came to the rescue of General Fry, and the two Representatives became involved in a bitter personal controversy. The outcome of the long and acrimonious debate was a polished shaft from Blaine's quiver directed at Conkling's well-known personal vanity. The weapon struck its mark, and Conkling never forgave Blaine for this conspicuous and rankling wound. From that day until he died he never exchanged a word with Blaine and apparently never saw him, although the two men were associated together as members of the same party in the House and in the Senate for more than

fifteen years, and it may here be said that wherever Conkling's influence could harass the ambition or hinder the upward steps of his adversary, harassment and hinderance were in the way.

Before Blaine was elected Speaker, he occasionally was called to the chair by the presiding officer, and he became one of the most conspicuous figures among the younger members of the majority of the House. His personal qualities were speedily made the subject of comment by observers, and visitors to the House of Representatives usually asked first to be shown Blaine. A newspaper correspondent writing at this time says: "Blaine is metallic; you cannot conceive how a shot would pierce him, for there seems to be no joint in his harness. He is a man who knows what the weather was yesterday morning in Dakota; what the Emperor's policy will be touching Mexico; on what day of the week the 16th of December, proximo, will fall; who is chairman of the school committee in Kennebunk; what is the best way of managing the national debt; together with all the other interests of to-day, which anybody else would stagger under. How he does it nobody knows. He is always in his place. He must absorb details by assimilation at his finger-ends. As I said, he is clear metal; his features are cast in a mould; his attitudes are those of a bronze figure; his voice clinks, and he has ideas as fixed as brass."

Blaine's first election as Speaker was on

the 4th of March, 1869, when he succeeded Schuyler Colfax, who had just been inaugurated as Vice-President of the United States. As Speaker he was alert, thoroughly well versed in parliamentary usage and in the rules, regulations, and precedents of his high office. He was impartial, quick, self-poised, and in all respects probably the best equipped parliamentarian who ever occupied the chair, except only (possibly) his great exemplar, Henry Clay, who still holds the reputation of being the best Speaker who ever presided over the House of Representatives. He spent more hours in the chair than any of his predecessors had been in the habit of doing, and was almost never absent from his place. His strength appeared to be indomitable, and through some of the longest sessions of the House he remained at his post without apparent fatigue. He was always courteous and fair, and never lost his head; when the most exciting scenes of parliamentary confusion raged around him, he alone remained immovable, composed, and intently observant of every detail of the tumultuous sea that was enclosed within the walls of the House. In a farewell address delivered when he finally laid down the emblem of his office for the last time, he admirably set forth the conditions under which the presiding officer must administer his duties in these words: "The Speakership of the American House of Representatives is a post of honor, of dignity, of power, of responsibility. Its duties are at once complex and continuous; they are both

onerous and delicate; they are performed in the bright light of day under the eye of the whole people, subject at all times to the closest observation and always attended with the sharpest criticism. I think no other official is held to such instant and such rigid accountability. Parliamentary rulings in their very nature are peremptory, almost absolute in authority and instantaneous in effect. They cannot always be enforced in such a way as to win applause or secure popularity, but I am sure that no man of any party who is worthy to fill this chair will ever see a dividing line between duty and policy."

During the latter part of Blaine's career in the House of Representatives he delivered one of his most remarkable speeches, which was on a proposition to extend amnesty to Jefferson Davis. The speech was made with all the vigor and energy of his character, and its unexpectedness, coming as it did like a fierce gale sweeping down from the North, so staggered and dismayed the advocates of this variety of "magnanimity" that they hated the speaker, while they were forced to admire the audacity of his attack and the spirit with which it was made. The address is generally known as the "Andersonville Speech," because Blaine did not so much object to Davis's political rehabilitation on the ground that he was the rebel chieftain as because in his capacity as President of the Confederacy he had sanctioned, authorized, and approved the atrocities practised on Union prisoners confined in the

Andersonville prison. Blaine's picture of the horrors of Andersonville, materials for which were drawn from rebel archives, as well as from the history of the time, was one of frightful vividness and realism. He quoted from documents written by Union and by secession officials, and from the testimony of persons who may be regarded as impartial, to prove the truth of the allegations which he brought not only against the management of the prison pen, but against the rebel chieftain himself. The argumentative portion of his speech is included in these words: "It is often said that we shall lift Mr. Davis again into great consequence by refusing him amnesty. That is not for me to consider. I only see before me, when his name is presented, a man who by a wave of his hand, by a nod of his head, could have put an end to the atrocious cruelties at Andersonville. Some of us had kinsmen there, many of us had friends there, all of us had countrymen there. I here protest, and shall with my vote protest, against calling back and crowning with the honors of full American citizenship the man who stands responsible for that organized murder." The bill did not pass.

The episode of the so-called Mulligan letters might be passed over in silence, but it is well enough to recall the facts. A certain package of missing letters was the focal point around which raged a bitter controversy. These were in Blaine's possession; and that was a dramatic scene in the House when, having reached the close of a preliminary statement of the case

against him, he seized the package of letters lying on his desk and brandished them in the face of the House. It had been said that the letters were destroyed and that he would never dare to have them printed. He now proceeded to have them read, one by one, and they were duly

Mr. Blaine's Home at Augusta, Me.

spread upon the records of the day's doings. Not to go more minutely into this unhappy business, it may be said that the investigating committee finally dropped the whole inquiry and failed to write out any opinion upon the testimony taken or to make an official report upon a matter which for a time aroused the atten-

tion not only of Congress but of the whole country.

Exactly when the Presidential ambition began to take shape in the mind of Blaine it is impossible to say, but he first appeared as a pronounced candidate in the Republican convention of 1876. On the first ballot he led with two hundred and eighty-five votes, L. P. Morton followed with one hundred and twenty-five, Benjamin H. Bristow one hundred and thirteen, Roscoe Conkling ninety-nine, Rutherford B. Hayes sixty-one, and three other candidates had seventy-two votes all told. After seven ballots Rutherford B. Hayes was nominated, having five votes more than was necessary for a choice. It was at this convention that a phrase which subsequently became celebrated was first applied to Blaine. Robert G. Ingersoll, in the course of his speech nominating Blaine, said: "Like an armed warrior, like a plumed knight, James G. Blaine marched down the halls of the American Congress and threw his shining lance full and fair against the brazen foreheads of the defamers of his country and the maligners of his honor. For the Republican party to desert this gallant leader now is as though an army should desert their general upon the field of battle." While this convention was in session Blaine remained in Washington. The weather was excessively hot, and on the Sunday previous to the assembling of the convention, Blaine, walking to church, was prostrated by a sun-stroke. He did not fully recover until the work of the convention was well under way,

and in the meantime reports of his death were circulated far and wide. It was believed by his devoted followers that this untoward casualty deprived him of the nomination, which otherwise was easily within his reach.

Blaine's first term of service in the United States Senate was by virtue of an appointment by the Governor to fill a vacancy. He was subsequently elected by the Legislature upon its assembling, notwithstanding an ardent effort on the part of his enemies to defeat his promotion to the Senate. When the Legislature assembled it was found that copies of the attacks made upon him during the Mulligan controversy had been mailed to all of the members, and the State House was deluged with printed matter calculated to prejudice the minds of the members against their stalwart leader. This attempt, however, was defeated, and, curiously enough, Democrats and Republicans united in their choice of Blaine, who was elected to the Senate by the unanimous vote of the Legislature, something unprecedented in political history. In the Senate his appearance was dreaded by some of the more conservative members, who were afraid that his brilliancy and picturesque method of conducting debate would interfere with the more solemn traditions of their conclave. They were, however, speedily reassured, and the newly elected Senator from Maine took his seat with becoming modesty and did not for some time participate largely in the debates. His first carefully prepared speech as Senator was made in opposition

to the silver craze, which was then at its height, and he opposed the inflation theories of the far West with a temperate and deprecatory argument addressed to the better judgment of the people. He argued that Congress had no more power to demonetize silver than to demonetize gold, and he advocated a policy of co-operating with foreign nations to secure a uniform standard of silver with gold. His speech went to the root of the matter, and it is to this day regarded as an admirable exposition of a sound financial policy to be pursued in regard to maintaining the parity of gold and silver.

Another topic which Blaine took up with much zest, and in the discussion of which he showed the results of profound thought and careful study, was South American trade with the United States. In this speech he outlined to some extent the policy which he pursued later on when he became Secretary of State. He advocated the payment of subsidies to American lines of steamships between the ports of the United States and Central America and South America. He showed how the great trade of the countries to the South of us went to Europe instead of coming to the United States, and he sketched a policy by which a diversion of this profitable trade could be made to our own country.

Blaine was again a candidate for the Presidential nomination in 1880, when Garfield was named by a decided majority. He took the stump for Garfield, and on the election of that

statesman was offered the post of Secretary of State, which he accepted. It is likely that Blaine's occupation of this high office had some influence upon the mind of Senator Conkling, who very soon developed a hostility toward the Garfield administration, which culminated finally in the resignation of the two New York Senators, Conkling and Platt. Out of this most unfortunate episode grew a long and angry controversy which divided the Republican party into two factions. The bitterness of this dispute was intensified by the failure of the New York Legislature to re-elect Messrs. Conkling and Platt, for they had apparently expected to be returned to the Senate. In the midst of this bitter contention President Garfield was assassinated, while on his way to a brief vacation, three months after his inauguration. But during his brief service in the Cabinet, Secretary Blaine had defined the foreign policy to be pursued by the Garfield administration, which was as follows: "First, to bring about peace and prevent future wars in North and South America; and, secondly, to cultivate such friendly commercial relations with all American countries as would lead to a large increase in the export trade of the United States. It was for the purpose of promoting peace on the Western Hemisphere that it was determined to invite all the independent governments of North and South America to meet in a peace conference at Washington on March 15, 1882. The project met with cordial approval in South America, and had it been car-

ried out would have raised the standard of civilization, and possibly by opening South American markets to our manufactures would have wiped out $12,000,000 balance of trade which Spanish America brings against us every year."

The death of Garfield apparently rendered necessary the reconstruction of the Cabinet, which resulted in Blaine's being succeeded by Mr. Frederick T. Frelinghuysen, of New Jersey, and only Robert T. Lincoln, Secretary of War, remained in the official family of President Arthur, who succeeded Garfield. But even the few months which Blaine spent in the Cabinet at this time were filled with useful activities. The Clayton-Bulwer treaty, relating to American interests on the Isthmus of Darien, was one of the important topics considered by Secretary Blaine, and a number of elaborate despatches were written by him concerning our relations with Mexico, British oppression in Ireland, and the union of the Central American States under one confederacy. Retiring from public life at the conclusion of his brief term of service in the Cabinet, Blaine removed to his home in Maine and addressed himself to the preparation of his historical work, "Twenty Years in Congress," the first volume of which appeared in April, 1884. This work, which in some respects was modelled upon Benton's "Thirty Years in the United States Senate," covers a most important part of our history, extending from Lincoln to Garfield, with a cursory review of the events which led up to the American Rebellion. It is

in fact a biography of the American people and a picture of their progress through the twenty years immediately after the death of Lincoln.

Blaine was again a candidate for the Presidential nomination before the Republican convention which assembled in Chicago in 1884, and was nominated on the fourth ballot, having five hundred and forty-one votes, four hundred and seven being necessary for a choice. The anti-Blaine elements had centred upon President Arthur as their candidate, and it was apparent that the friends of Conkling, and others who had all along opposed Blaine's ambition, would not heartily support Blaine in the contest which was to follow. The result of the canvass was the election of Grover Cleveland, who had been nominated by the Democrats. Various causes conspired to weaken the cause of Blaine, one of them being the extraordinary episode known as the "Burchard business." In an address to Blaine at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York, the Rev. Dr. Burchard spoke of the Democratic party as the party of "Rum, Romanism, and Rebellion," and Blaine's failure then and there to make some response signifying his disapproval of this statement undoubtedly influenced many votes against him in the canvass. It was said that Blaine had been called on unexpectedly, and while his mind was concentrated in an effort to frame something pertinent to say in reply to the address, he failed to notice the singular phrase employed by Dr. Burchard. The vote of the State of New York determined the issue by a

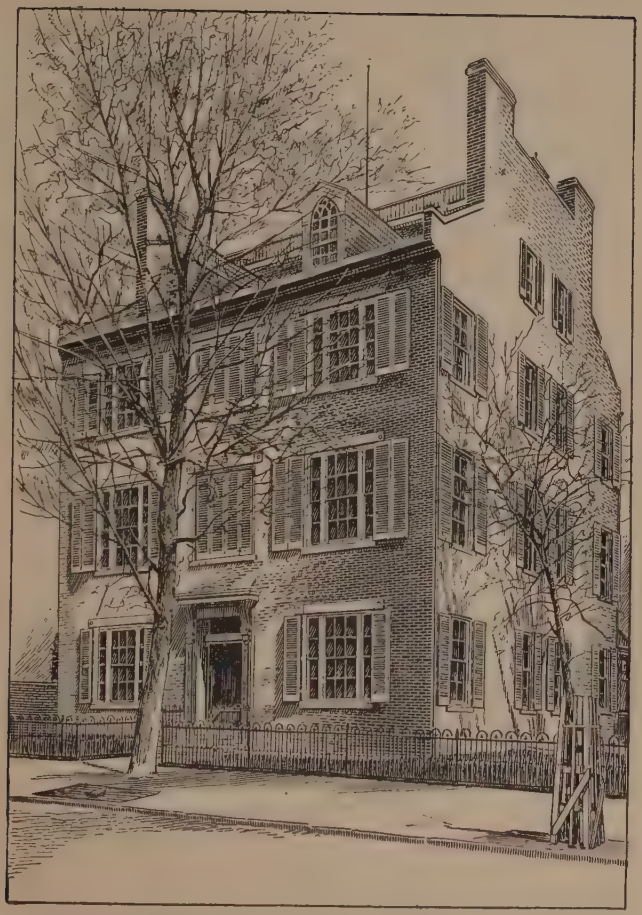
small plurality. Of the popular vote, Blaine received four million eight hundred and fifty-one thousand nine hundred and eighty-one, and Cleveland had four million eight hundred and seventy-four thousand nine hundred and eighty-six votes. The result was undoubtedly sorely disappointing to Blaine, who had in vain endured the weariness and fatigue of a long and exhausting campaign. But he speedily rallied from his depression, and in an address which he made to his fellow-citizens at Augusta he treated the issues of the campaign with fresh vigor and without betraying the least annoyance at his defeat.

Absence in Europe during a part of the next succeeding years prevented him from becoming positively identified with the efforts which were put forth to nominate him again in 1888. There were many contradictory reports received from him, and although when he was formally approached and interviewed on the subject of his nomination he expressed himself as being out of the field, his tenacious followers insisted that he should be regarded as a candidate for the nomination. However this may be, the outcome of the national convention that year was the nomination of General Benjamin Harrison. Blaine returned to the United States and took an active part in the canvass, speaking in various portions of the country and lending his powerful support to the Republican nominations.

On the accession of General Harrison to the Presidency, Blaine was again appointed Secretary of State, and he proceeded to carry out his

South American-Central American policy with much vigor and doubtless with infinite satisfaction. As if he realized the shortness of the time now left to him, he undertook at once with amazing vigor the execution of the plans which had been frustrated by the death of Garfield and his retiring from public life. Instead of a peace conference to meet at Washington, Blaine now proposed a Pan-American Congress, which really had the same object in view, although the scope of the policy to be considered was made much wider. The objects of the Pan-American Congress, as officially declared, were to adopt measures that should tend to preserve and promote the prosperity of the several American States, the formation of a customs and trade union, the establishment of regular and frequent communication between the ports of the several States in the compact, the establishment of a uniform system of customs dues, weights and measures, trademarks, silver currency, and an agreement looking toward the arbitration of all questions and disputes by an international court. The principal result of this congress was the adoption of a system of trade reciprocity with the South American and Central American States, which it is claimed has inured greatly to the benefit of the republic of the United States.

It is likely that the calamities that now overtook Blaine not only depressed his spirits, which had always been elastic and animated, but hastened that gradual decay of his physical powers which eventually resulted in making his retire-



Mr. Blaine's Washington Home, at 17 Madison Place, where he Died—Formerly the Seward Mansion.

ment from public life absolutely necessary. On January 15, 1890, his oldest son, Walker Blaine, who had been his main-stay and support in the cares of State, died suddenly. Within a month later his oldest daughter, Alice, also died; and another son, Emmons Blaine, died in 1892. A few weeks after the death of his daughter, Blaine had an attack of paralysis and was taken to his home, and during the summer of 1891 was unable to attend to the affairs of the State Department. During his absence many questions of great importance arose and were disposed of by President Harrison, who was obliged to assume the duties of Secretary of State to a great degree during the prostration of the Secretary.

As if pursued by adversity relentlessly, and in spite of all efforts to escape, his name was presented at the Republican convention of 1892 by ill-advised friends. It is likely that the long successful statesman, now enfeebled by disease and made irritable and somewhat vacillating by the misfortunes which had so persistently followed him, was not sufficiently able to control his ardent admirers in the national convention. At any rate, although he had repeatedly expressed his determination not to permit his name again to be used as a Presidential candidate, his adherents insisted in pressing it, and to their inexpressible chagrin and the mortification of all sincere admirers of Secretary Blaine, he was defeated. Harrison was nominated by a very handsome majority. During the hurly-burly which was caused by the attempt to force Blaine into the

convention, apparently against his will, he peremptorily resigned his post as Secretary of State and left Washington for his summer home in Maine. This step, while it could not be thoroughly understood by politicians and public men, was generally regarded by the people at large as a sign of disagreement between the President and the Secretary of State. But whatever were the interior facts of this curious complication, it is certain that, later on, the reconciliation of these two men was complete. Blaine returned to Washington after the election of Grover Cleveland in 1892, but was in feeble condition, unable to see any of the devoted friends who besieged his house, imploring information as to his real condition. Contradictory reports of his health were circulated, but he grew weaker day by day, and died quietly, January 27, 1893.

The personality of James G. Blaine was the most conspicuous and remarkable of any in American public life during the period immediately succeeding the close of the Rebellion and ending with his own career. His alluring qualities were many. In person he was commanding; his figure was strikingly handsome and was sure to attract attention anywhere. His manner was winning and affable, and he impressed those with whom he came in contact as possessing a kindly individual interest and sympathy. His wonderful memory for faces and remote personal incidents aided him materially in maintaining this pleasing character. He doubtless studied to commend himself to those whose esteem he de-

sired to win. Illness and grief impaired these qualities at the last; but he will always be remembered by the hosts who admired him as "the magnetic man from Maine."

In debate he was aggressive, dashing, and audacious. He was quick to discern the weak points in the harness of an adversary, and by his incessant and sharp attacks he sometimes worried an antagonist to the verge of desperation. Preserving his own good temper and coolness, he would contrive to goad an adversary with repeated flights of barbed arrows of rhetoric which were exasperating to the last degree. Yet withal he was a generous gladiator and he never took a mean advantage of an opponent, but readily conceded every point that was fairly made against himself. His studied orations, of which there are several on record, were calm, lofty in tone, and worthy of a high place in American literature. His memorial address, pronounced in the national Capitol by invitation of Congress, on the death of Garfield, while it is not free from small defects, may be regarded as a fair example of Blaine's more elaborate form of oratory.

In conversation he was brilliant and versatile, his range of reading and observation being very wide, and his mind concerning itself with an almost infinite variety of topics. His habit of thought was rapid and his conclusions usually intuitive and generally correct. In public speaking his voice was ringing, and it had a certain penetrative quality that has been called "me-

tallic." His oratory was argumentative and illustrative, rather than eloquent and sentimental; and his propositions were always put forth with a lucidity and homeliness of application that gave to Lincoln's speeches their chief charm.

He was a tremendous worker, and although he found it necessary, especially in his later years, to employ a secretary and amanuensis, he never dictated any part of his voluminous work except that which was purely narrative. It was this close application to study and writing which, added to the severe mental strain of an arduous and often stormy life, shortened the number of his days and hastened the collapse that finally overtook him while he was yet only in the sixty-third year of his age, thus closing the career of the most brilliant statesman of his generation.

James A. Garfield.

## XI.

### JAMES A. GARFIELD.

In his memorial oration on Garfield, Blaine quoted the words in which Webster described the place where the elder members of the Webster family were born—"a log cabin raised amid the snow-drifts of New Hampshire." The orator then said: "With requisite change of scene, the same words would aptly portray the early days of Garfield. The poverty of the frontier, where all are engaged in a common struggle, and where a common sympathy and hearty co-operation lighten the burdens of each, is a very different poverty—different in kind, different in influence and effect—from that conscious and humiliating indigence which is every day forced to contrast itself with neighboring wealth on which it feels a sense of grinding dependence. The poverty of the frontier is indeed no poverty; it is but the beginning of wealth, and has the boundless possibilities of the future always opening before it."

When Garfield was elected United States Senator from Ohio, in January, 1880, President Hinsdale, of Hiram College, Ohio, made an address to the students of the institution appropriate to the occasion when so much honor had

been conferred upon one who, as he said, "had been bell-ringer and president" of that college. In the course of his remarks President Hinsdale said: "General Garfield once rang the school-bell when a student here. That did not make him the man he is. Convince me that it did and I will hang up a bell in every tree in the campus and set you all to ringing. Thomas Corwin when a boy drove a wagon, and became the head of the Treasury; Thomas Ewing boiled salt, and became a Senator; Henry Clay rode a horse to the mill from the Slashes, and he became the Great Commoner of the West. But it was not the wagon, nor the salt, nor the horse that made these men great. These are interesting facts in the lives of these illustrious men. They show that in our country it has been and still is possible for young men of ability, energy, and determined purpose to rise above lowly conditions and win places of usefulness and honor. Poverty may be a good school; straitened circumstances may develop power and character; but the principal conditions for success are in the man and not in his surroundings."

The simple fact is that American history, even in recent years, is full of examples of personal vicissitudes that are dramatic in their sharp contrasts, and Garfield's career was so compact with these that after he had passed through the earlier days of his training he rapidly ascended through several important successive stages. Within six months he was successively president of a college, State Senator of Ohio, a major-gen-

eral of the Army of the United States, and Representative to the national Congress. As his eulogist has said, "a combination of honors so varied, so elevated, within a period so brief, and to a man so young, is without precedent or parallel in the history of the country." Garfield's mother was left a widow while he was yet an infant. She was a woman of unusual energy, faith, and courage. She declared that her children should not be separated, and she kept them at home together until they were able to take care of themselves. As President Hinsdale, in the address above quoted, says of young Garfield, his life did not materially differ from the lives of his neighbors' boys. "He chopped wood, and so did they; he hoed, and so did they; he carried butter to the store in a little pail, and so did they. Other families that had not lost their heads naturally shot ahead of the Garfields in property, but such differences counted for far less then than they do now." While yet a lad, the desire of the youngster to earn a little money led him to become a boatman on the Ohio Canal, which passed within a short distance of the Garfield farm. He discharged the humble duties of his place with so much fidelity and diligence that he attracted the attention of his superiors and was promoted to the loftier position of steersman of a barge.

After about eighteen months of this sort of labor, laying by as much as he could of his small earnings, he took a step forward and shipped as sailor on one of the schooners plying on Lake

Erie. Illness compelled him to relinquish this mode of life, and he returned home and confided to his mother his ambitious plans for the future. He had already acquired an elementary knowledge of common branches of education, and now resolved to build a loftier structure for himself. With the small savings that were within his reach, and by his mother's assistance, he began a course of study at an obscure institution in a small country village not far from Orange, O.

Garfield's Boyhood Home.

Young Garfield and his room-mate, too poor to pay their board in the village, rented a room in an old frame building not far from the academy and there did their own cooking and house-keeping in the most primitive way while they imbibed elements of knowledge at the Pierian spring which gushed forth in the Geauga Academy. But the future President had a stout heart and a determined will, and he applied himself with honest and faithful toil to the task which he had set before him. He found work among the car-

penters of the village, and spent his mornings, evenings, and Saturdays in the shops, where willing hands were held out to give the boy a lift along his rugged road. During the winter he taught a district school, and thus added a little to his income. And so for several years, teaching in the winter, working at the carpenter's bench at odd times, and attending the academy during the fall and spring terms, he was able to secure the training necessary for a higher collegiate course. He was a tall, muscular, fair-haired country lad, browned by wind and exposure, sound in every fibre of his body, a strong athlete, a good student, and a great favorite with his associates.

In the fall of 1854 Garfield was admitted to the junior class of Williams College, Williamstown, Mass., his previous studies having been sufficiently thorough to enable him to skip the freshman and sophomore courses. It is a matter of record that the polished young students among whom he was now thrown were disposed to look somewhat contemptuously on the rough Ohio carpenter and farmer's boy who had ventured into their company. Rude remarks and ruder treatment he bore with patience, high-spirited though he was; and without regarding the slights and taunts that were occasionally tossed at him, he devoted himself with energy to his studies, and very speedily acquired a reputation for scholarship far above that of any of his fellow-students. When he graduated, in 1856, he carried off the honors of his class in metaphysics, a distinction of great merit. Three years later (in

1859) Garfield was nominated for State Senator by the Anti-Slavery party of Portage and Summit Counties, O., and was elected by a handsome majority. He had previously taken part in the political campaigns of the region and was already pretty well known as a stump-speaker. He had meanwhile been chosen president of the Hiram Eclectic Institute, in Portage County, and had won additional fame for the little institution of which the people of Northern Ohio were already very proud.

When the slave-holding States of the South began to secede from the Union during the winter of 1860–1, Garfield's patriotism was fired to fervent heat, and he took every occasion to speak eloquently and vigorously in favor of a prompt exercise of the right of the General Government to coerce the so-called seceded States. The Union, he argued, was meant to be perpetual, and secession was to be firmly and finally blocked by the power of the Federal Government.

Garfield was early in the field when the war began, and at the head of a regiment of brave Ohio soldiers he was assigned to duty as an independent force in Eastern Kentucky. His first task was to check the advance of General Humphrey Marshall, who was marching down the Big Sandy River with the intention of co-operating with other rebel forces in Kentucky and precipitating the State into secession. The young college president was entirely unversed in the art of war, but, as he afterward expressed himself, knew just enough of military science to measure

the extent of his ignorance. With a handful of men he was obliged to march in the rough winter weather of 1861 into a strange country, among a hostile population, to confront a largely superior force under the command of a graduate of West Point who had already seen service. Like many another patriotic civilian un-

The Garfield Monument at Washington.

acquainted with military strategy and tactics, Garfield plunged into the fight and imparted to his raw and undisciplined troops a good measure of his own personal courage. He rallied his little column, and to the consternation and astonishment of the rebel force opposed to him, he checked their advance, routed their column, and swept from an important territory the rising

tide of the rebellion. With less than two thousand men, and without cannon, he had met an army of five thousand and had driven Marshall's forces from point to point and finally had turned the stream of military invasion. His subsequent career in the army, which was not a long one, was brilliant, effective, and worthy of the high praise which he received from his superiors. In 1863 he was assigned to the responsible post of chief of staff to General Rosecrans, at the head of the Army of the Cumberland. He very speedily manifested his hostility to slavery, and incurred the ill-will of some of his associates who were yet disposed to regard American slavery as a sacred thing. On one occasion a fugitive slave took refuge in the Union ranks, and the division commander wrote a mandatory order to General Garfield to hunt out the fugitive and deliver him to the custody of his owner. Garfield endorsed on the order, with great deliberation, the following extraordinary sentence: "I respectfully but positively decline to allow my command to search for or deliver up any fugitive slaves. I conceive that they are here for quite another purpose. The command is open and no obstacles will be placed in the way of search." That fugitive slave was not returned.

While Garfield was fighting in the field, new and unexpected honors fell to his lot. The energy and tact with which he had allayed the political dissensions that had arisen in the Army of the Cumberland, his military prowess, and his skill in discipline were rewarded successively

by commissions as brigadier-general and major-general, his last promotion being given him for gallant and meritorious conduct in the battle of Chickamauga. When the Army of the Cumberland was reorganized under the command of General Thomas, Garfield was offered one of its divisions; but meanwhile he had been chosen a Representative in Congress from his own district in Ohio, and after seeking the advice of President Lincoln and Secretary Stanton, he decided to accept the post of Congressman, and resigned his commission of major-general December 5, 1863, and took his seat in the House of Representatives two days later. He had just completed the thirty-second year of his age.

In the trying career of a member of the House of Representatives Garfield showed himself a good parliamentary orator and an admirable debater. He differed from most parliamentary leaders in that a certain *bonhomie* natural to this vigorous young Westerner was mingled with scholarly refinement and polish not usual in the lower House of Congress. He spoke so readily that he was frequently importuned by his fellow-members to aid them in measures which they brought before the House, and perhaps spoke too often for his own fame. One writer says: "His superior knowledge used to offend some of his less learned colleagues. At first they thought him bookish and pedantic, until they found how useful was his store of knowledge, and how pertinent to the business in hand were the drafts he made upon it." It must

be admitted that Garfield's classic and literary allusions seemed somewhat out of place to those who listened to the debates from the gallery of the House and heard him quote ancients and moderns, to the infinite weariness of many of his associates, who never heard of Juvenal, and to whom Wordsworth and Coleridge were strangers. Blaine, in his eulogy, says of Garfield: "He perhaps more nearly resembles Mr. Seward in his supreme faith in the all-conquering power of a principle; he had the love of learning and the patient industry of investigation, to which John Quincy Adams owed his prominence and the Presidency; he had some of those ponderous elements of mind which distinguished Mr. Webster, and which indeed in all our public life have left the great Massachusetts Senator without an intellectual peer."

On the various complicated and knotty questions that grew out of the process of reconstruction at the end of the civil war, Garfield always took an advanced and radical position. He was one of the devoted band that stood by Senator Wade, of Ohio, in his somewhat brutal course as member of the Committee on the Conduct of the War. Garfield was a moderate protectionist, and while he supported measures for the protection of American industries, habitually counselled measures less severe than some of the more ultra protectionists in the House of Representatives advocated with much strenuousness. On the tariff bill of 1870 he said: "After studying the whole subject as carefully as I am able, I am

The Home of Garfield at Mentor, O.

firmly of the opinion that the wisest thing that the protectionists in this House can do is to unite in a moderate reduction of duties on imported articles. He is not a faithful Representative who merely votes for the highest rate proposed, in order to show on the record that he

General Garfield in 1863.

voted for the highest figure and therefore is a sound protectionist. He is the wisest man who sees the tides and currents of public opinion and uses his best efforts to protect the industry of the people against sudden collapses and sudden changes. . . . The great want of industry is a stable policy, and it is a significant comment on the character of our legislation that Con-

gress has become a terror to the business men of the country."

In July, 1864, Senator Wade, of Ohio, and Representative Henry Winter Davis, of Maryland, united in the publication of a document, afterward famous as the Wade-Davis manifesto. It was directed against the reconstruction policy of President Lincoln, as outlined in his proclamation of that month and year. A reconstruction bill, which had been supported by Wade and Davis and their allies, had passed through both Houses of Congress, but it failed to receive the signature of the President in the closing hours of Congress, which adjourned July 4, 1864. It was reported that the Wade-Davis manifesto against President Lincoln had been written by Garfield. The publication created the most intense excitement throughout the West, and was vehemently denounced by the people of the Western Reserve, where Garfield had his home. It was regarded as an unkind and unjust attack upon the beloved Lincoln, and was resented by sturdy Republicans throughout the country. Just at this time the convention to nominate a candidate for Congress in Garfield's district assembled. Garfield was summoned by a committee of the convention to appear before that body and explain his standing in regard to the Wade-Davis manifesto. He had already denied that he was the author of the letter, but he appeared before the convention and made a speech which he naturally supposed would end his political career then and there. He denied

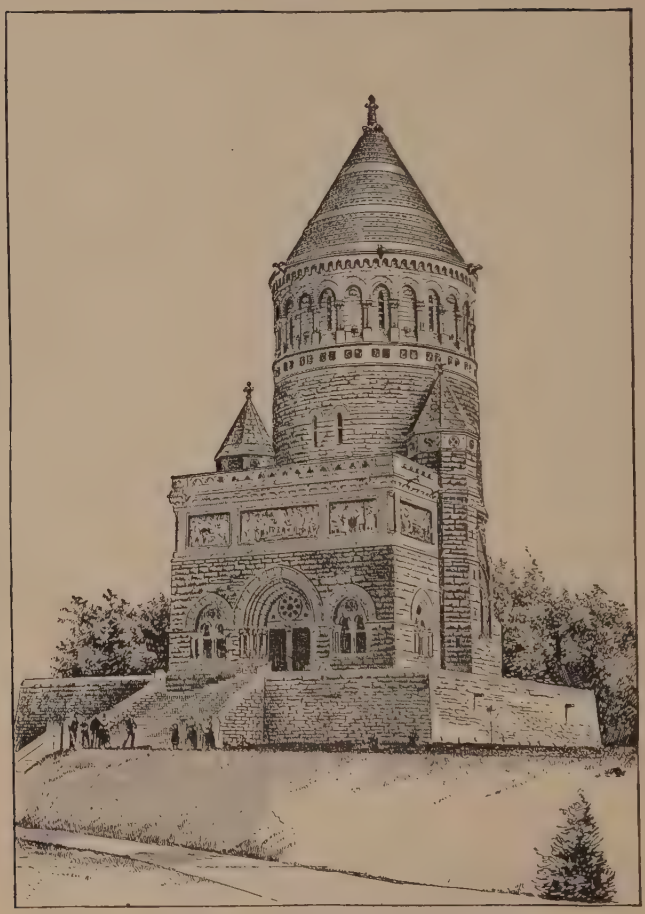
that he had written the Wade-Davis letter, but he approved the document, defended the motives of its authors, and asserted his own right to independence of thought and action, and told the delegates in the convention that if they did not want a free agent as their Representative, they might better look elsewhere, for he could serve them no longer. So saying, he strode out of the convention hall; but before he could leave the building a burst of applause, which he imagined was the signal of his defeat, broke upon his ears. It was the signal of his nomination by acclamation.

Garfield, as we have said, was elected to the Senate in January, 1880, succeeding Allen G. Thurman, whose term of office expired March 3, 1881. But before he could qualify he was nominated for President of the United States in the summer of 1880 by the Republicans in their convention at Chicago. The nomination of Garfield was bitterly opposed by the men who were associated with Roscoe Conkling in the support of General Grant, whose name was pressed upon the convention as a candidate for a third term. After a long and somewhat heated contest, Garfield was nominated on the thirty-sixth ballot. The Conkling element had been defeated by this choice, and in order to conciliate the associates of the Senator from New York, Chester A. Arthur was named as candidate for Vice-President. This selection, however, was made without any reference to the personal wishes of Senator Conkling, and it was asserted that he took

no part in the convention after the nomination of Garfield.

The Presidential election of that year resulted in the choice of Garfield by a majority of fifty-nine electoral votes. In the popular vote Garfield had 4,437,345; General Hancock, Democrat, had 4,435,015; and Weaver, Greenback, 305,931. His inaugural address was a straightforward, business-like, and eminently practical oration. It was read slowly and effectively and made an excellent impression throughout the country. His Cabinet was as follows: Secretary of State, James G. Blaine; Secretary of the Treasury, William Windom; Secretary of War, Robert T. Lincoln; Secretary of the Navy, William H. Hunt; Secretary of the Interior, S. J. Kirkwood; Attorney General, Wayne McVeagh; Postmaster General, Thomas L. James.

As soon as the purposes of General Garfield could be unfolded, they were shown to be fair, just, and statesman-like. He gave promises of being a safe, conservative, and patriotic President, and his talents as an administrative officer and a legislator were likely to acquire for him an honorable record and enduring fame. But he was very soon called upon to face a serious partisan contest which appeared in the Republican party. A quarrel arose over the appointments to Federal office in the State of New York. This unhappy disagreement finally culminated in the resignation of Senators Conkling and Platt, of that State, and their appeal to the Legislature to approve their acts by re-electing them. Presi-



The Garfield Monument at Cleveland, O.

dent Garfield, however, apparently having the support of the great mass of the people, pursued the course which he had marked out for himself without reference to the angry protests of the

two Senators. He believed that the true prerogatives of the executive office were involved in the issue which had been raised against him, and that he would be unfaithful to his obligations if he failed to maintain with all their vigor the constitutional rights and dignities of his great office. In the eulogy so often quoted, Blaine said: "More than this need not be said; less than this could not be said. Justice to the dead, the highest obligation that devolves upon the living, demands the declaration that in all the bearings of the subject, actual or possible, the President was content in his mind, justified in his conscience, immovable in his conclusions." The sum and substance of this miserable business was that the two New York Senators claimed the right to defeat any nomination to office in their State made by the President and unacceptable to themselves. Out of this bitter contention grew a schism in the party which was long and deep. Washington was confused with rumors of even more serious difficulties between the President and political enemies in his own party. In the midst of this clamor, July 2, 1881, as President Garfield, accompanied by Secretary Blaine, was leaving Washington for a brief holiday, he was murderously fired upon by one Guiteau, a person of then unknown antecedents, who had haunted the corridors of the White House and other public places for weeks previous. The motive of his crime has never been fully understood, but when arrested he exclaimed, "I did it, and want

to be arrested. I am a Stalwart, and Arthur is President now."

The excitement throughout the country, and we may say throughout the civilized world, which followed this dreadful deed can be likened only to the same state of feeling which prevailed when Lincoln was assassinated in 1865. For a time it seemed as if the shock to the public sensibilities had arrested every other thought save that which centred in Washington, where the President was believed to be slowly dying. But weeks of suspense passed, and the iron constitution of the chief magistrate fought bravely for his survival. That summer will long be remembered by the American people as one of deep gloom, sorrow, and anxiety. The weather was dry, hot, and oppressive, and on September 6th the dying President was carried to the sea-shore at Elberon, N. J., where, after a few more days of failing strength and intense suffering, he passed away. He died on the 19th of September, and was immediately succeeded by Vice-President Chester A. Arthur. A great wave of grief swept over the land, and amid the lamentations of the people the body of Garfield was carried by a funeral train back to his native Ohio, where it was laid to rest in a magnificent mausoleum, built in the suburbs of Cleveland.

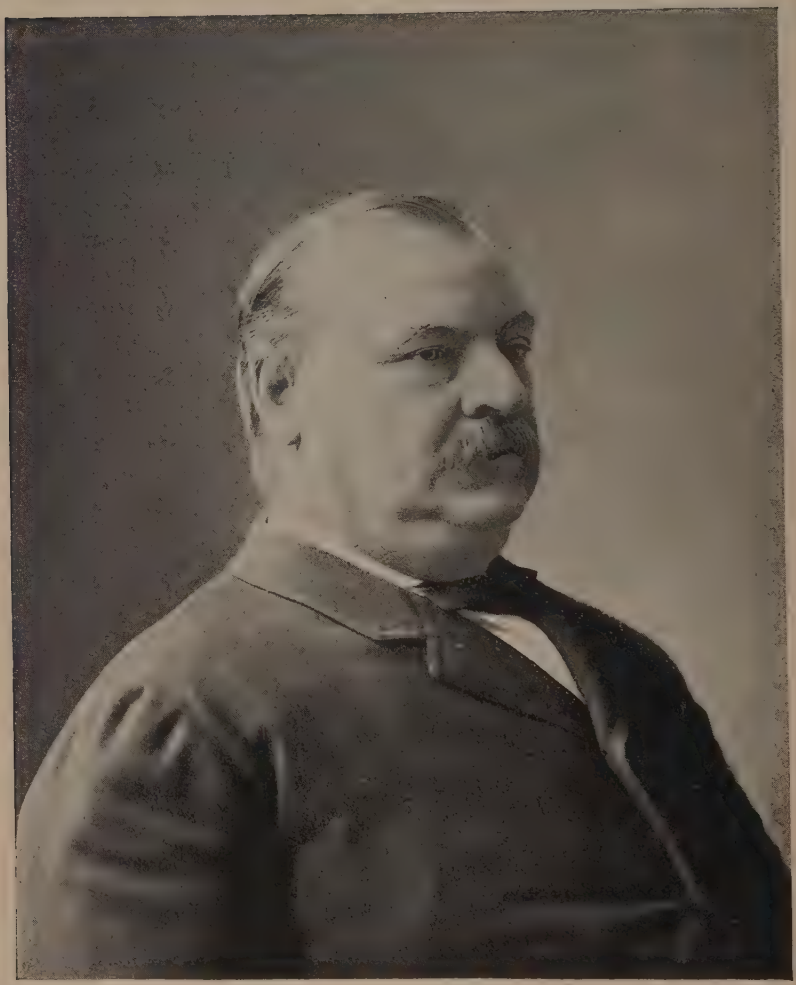
Garfield's person was impressive and manly; his stature was six feet; he was broad-shouldered, compactly built, and was the personification of physical strength and health. He had an unusually large head, a dome-like forehead, light

brown hair and full beard, large light-blue eyes, prominent nose, and ruddy complexion. He was plain in his dress, usually wore a dark slouch hat, and presented the appearance of a comfortable and well-to-do Western farmer or merchant, rather than the scholar and statesman that he was.

As we have indicated, his training was thorough, and to his indomitable industry rather than to any remarkable genius we must attribute his achievements in public life—civil and military. By nature he was of an affectionate disposition, tenaciously devoted to his friends and almost feminine in his attachments to those who won his confidence and affection. With certain limitations, he was qualified to hold and administer the highest office in the gift of the American people, and had he lived, doubtless would have achieved for himself still greater fame than that which his untimely taking-off has possibly attached to a career so tragically ended.

The last scene of all, his slow passage from this life to the life beyond, by the borders of the ocean at Elberon, has never been more eloquently touched upon than in the closing words of Blaine's memorial oration: "As the end drew near, his early craving for the sea returned. The stately mansion of power had been to him the wearisome hospital of pain, and he begged to be taken from its prison walls; from its oppressive, stifling air; from its homelessness and its hopelessness. Gently, silently, the love of a great people bore the pale sufferer to the longed-for healing of the sea, to live or to die, as God

should will, within sight of its heaving billows, within sound of its manifold voices. With wan, fevered face tenderly lifted to the cooling breeze, he looked out wistfully upon the ocean's changing waters; on its fair sails whitening in the morning light; on its restless waves rolling shoreward to break and die beneath the noonday sun: on the red clouds of evening arching low to the horizon; on the serene and shining pathway of the stars. Let us think that his dying eyes read a mystic meaning which only the rapt and parting soul may know. Let us believe that in the silence of the receding world he heard the great waves breaking on a further shore and felt already upon his wasted brow the breath of the eternal morning."



President Grover Cleveland.

## XII.

## GROVER CLEVELAND.

We have now taken a brief survey of a goodly company of American statesmen with a view to determine, so far as possible, their assignment to positions in the history of their country, and to discover lessons in their careers for the incitement of others to persevere to attempts at achievement. These all have passed over to "the silent majority," and the places which they will each occupy will be fixed as time rolls on. As inflexible as the laws of life, as unsparing as death, is the verdict of posterity which will assign to each his ultimate station in the temple of fame. The process of determination began as soon as each man passed over into the pale realms of shade. The procession is still moving onward.

Grover Cleveland is nearest to us of these worthies because he, the twelfth on the list, is still in the land of the living. When the men of this time are removed beyond the confusion of immediate events, other generations will see the lost leaders with a clearer vision. Their characters will have taken their places in a true perspective. We can only guess at a venture what will be the dictum of that far-away jury. Cleveland, born in an obscure New Jersey village, chris-

tened Stephen Grover Cleveland, the son of a rural clergyman, gave no more promise of future greatness than any of his predecessors in the long line of public men whose characteristics we have been considering. Like others of that company, young Cleveland appeared to take to the village store as affording one of the means of gaining a living that was readiest to his hand. Like them, too, he drifted about at first somewhat aimlessly, and it was not until 1855, when he was past eighteen years of age, that he really made a beginning in the career that was to land him finally in the White House. He studied law in Buffalo, N. Y., after taking a turn in the work of assisting in compiling "a short-horn herd-book." Vigorous in health, ambitious, manly, and full of courage, he showed himself in the Buffalo law office to be a youth of intelligence and decision of character. He was admitted to the Bar in 1859, but he remained four more years with the law firm where he imbibed the elements of his profession, and thus had eight good years of legal training. As office boy, student, and embryo barrister, he was thoroughly rooted and grounded in the theory and practice of law.

As a young practitioner at the bar he made himself so favorably known to the people of Erie County that his appointment as District Attorney in 1863 was taken as a fit and proper assignment to duty. So ably did he fill the position to which he had been appointed that he was nominated by his party, the Democrats, for District Attorney in 1865, but was defeated by Mr. L. K. Bass,

with whom, later on, he was associated in a firm of lawyers. At the age of thirty-three, in 1870, he was elected Sheriff of Erie County, an office which he discharged with fairness and ability. Another step in advance was taken in 1881 when he was elected Mayor of the city of Buffalo by a majority of thirty-five hundred. Buffalo was then a Republican city, but local affairs had got into such a condition that the election of a mayor on a non-partisan ticket had become a necessity, and Cleveland, by his honest devotion to duty, his strict integrity and public spirit, had so commended himself to the people that he was chosen their candidate without regard to party lines.

The local government of Buffalo had drifted into a condition of slovenliness and carelessness which needed a strong hand to bring order out of chaos and to restore public affairs to a basis of economy and frugality. The lax way of doing things which had for years characterized the administration of public affairs had not only aroused the indignation and dissatisfaction of the people, but had attracted the attention of men who, like Cleveland, were determined that a better government was necessary to rescue the municipality from extravagance and corruption. He became at once so famous for his veto messages sent to the Common Council that he was generally known as the "Veto Mayor." These messages are interesting as a study of municipal government. They touch problems of daily occurrence and evince on the part of their author a determination to do good service

in the cause of honest government. One can imagine the dismay of the happy-go-lucky politicians and time-servers who were confronted occasionally by a breezy message which would contain some such sentence as this: "I cannot rid myself of the idea that this city government in its relation to the tax-payers is a business establishment, and that it is put in our hands to be conducted on business principles." Or this: "The extreme tenderness and consideration for those who desire to contract with the city, and the touching and paternal solicitude lest they should be improvidently led into a bad bargain, is, I am sure, an exception to general business rules, and seems to have no place in this selfish, sordid world, except as found in the administration of municipal affairs."

The administration of Mayor Cleveland, so totally different from that of any officer who had preceded him, and so unlike that of some other municipal officers throughout the country, attracted the attention of the people of New York to his courage and his fidelity to public trusts. Accordingly in 1882 he was nominated by the Democratic party their candidate for Governor in opposition to Charles J. Folger, then Secretary of the United States Treasury, who had been nominated for the same office by the Republicans of the State. Mr. Folger had been nominated at the instance, it was alleged, of the national administration, and although he was an honest, able, and patriotic gentleman, the voters of the State resented this alleged interference with their in-

dependence. It was claimed, and not without reason, that the Federal administration had forced Folger upon the party, with a serene indifference to all other considerations than those of expediency and in the tranquil expectation that his nomination would be followed by an election. During this canvass the so-called Independents played a conspicuous part, and while they were active in their advocacy of the merits of Cleveland, the rank and file and many of the leaders of the Republican party sulked in their tents and stayed away from the polls. The result was the election of Cleveland by an overwhelming majority. Cleveland received a plurality of 192,854 over Folger, and a majority over all candidates of 151,742.

He went into office on January 1, 1883, and his inaugural address was apparently modelled on the business-like and unpretentious message of one of his predecessors in office, Governor Tilden. He paid marked attention to the economical questions which concerned the affairs of the State, and manifested a determination to root out ancient abuses and correct extravagance and recklessness of expenditure wherever these could be found. His administration was characterized by just such reforms as might have been expected after such a message. He vetoed bills that were designed, as he thought, to block the progress of economic reforms, and the State administration was really an expansion of the principles that had controlled his official action while he was Mayor of the city of Buffalo.

The House in which President Cleveland was Born, at Caldwell, N. J.

The portentous majority with which he had been elected Governor, and the record which he made in that office by his courage and severe simplicity of administration, gave him great vogue throughout the country, and his nomination by the Democratic National Convention in July, 1884, seemed to follow as a matter of course. Out of eight hundred and twenty votes he received on the first ballot six hundred and eighty-three, a two-thirds vote being necessary for a nomination. In the letter he wrote accepting the nomination for the Presidency he repeated and expanded the views he had so often enforced while in the office of Mayor and Governor. James G. Blaine was the nominee of the Republican National Convention, and the result of the election in November of that year gave Cleveland a majority of thirty-seven electoral votes. In a total popular vote of 10,067,610, Cleveland had 4,874,986, and Blaine had 4,851,981. New York was the pivotal State and was carried for Cleveland by a small plurality. Its thirty-six electoral votes, however, decided the contest in his favor.

His Cabinet officers were as follows: Secretary of State, Thomas F. Bayard; Secretary of the Treasury, Daniel Manning; Secretary of War, William C. Endicott; Secretary of the Navy, William C. Whitney; Postmaster-General, William F. Vilas; Attorney-General, Augustus H. Garland; Secretary of the Interior, L. Q. C. Lamar.

Generally speaking, it may be said that Cleve-

land's administration of the National Government was modelled on the same general principles which had distinguished his course in the minor executive offices which he had filled. His immediate following was largely made up of Independents who were pledged to civil-service reform, and Cleveland entered the White House with renewed expressions of loyalty to this movement. It has been forcibly claimed on the part of his friends who are also advocates of civil-service reform that any deflections from the path which they had marked out for him are to be charged to the tremendous pressure exerted upon him in his high office by the politicians, without whose aid he possibly could not have reached the Presidential chair. The sincerity of his professions and the honesty of his intention to carry out the principles of civil-service reform have been conceded even by those who are not political friends and who possibly have not expected that the party which elected him can ever be induced to surrender the ancient doctrine, "To the victors belong the spoils."

During his first administration he came in conflict with many influential members of his party who insisted that the Republican office-holders should be removed indiscriminately and their places filled with Democrats of undoubted party loyalty. Among other important events which marked his administration was the naval expedition for the protection of American interests in Aspinwall when that city was burned by the revolutionists in 1885. The encroachment

of cattle companies and ranchmen upon certain partly vacated lands belonging to the Indian Territory formed another vexatious and complicated problem which was solved by the determined action of the President, who resisted the pleadings of the squatters and ordered their immediate vacation of the lands which they were holding without lawful title. During the same term a discussion arose between himself and the Senate in regard to the confirmation of persons nominated to places of emolument and trust. The Senate demanded the production of papers on which suspensions and removals had been ordered. The President took the ground that these were not public but private documents, and should not be placed on the files of the Senate. After a somewhat acrimonious discussion, the Senate virtually receded from its position and most of the persons nominated were confirmed without more ado. An attack upon the Chinese at Rock Springs, Wyo., was another of the unfortunate complications which attended President Cleveland's administration, and the President, somewhat at variance with the preconceived notions of his party, took the view that the United States, while not bound by international law to pay for loss of life or property by Chinamen in the United States, should pay an indemnity to the sufferers and their families.. This was voted by Congress. When further anti-Chinese disturbances occurred in Oregon and other far Western States, he ordered out the military and expressed his determination to pro-

tect the Chinese at all hazards, so far as the power of the government should permit.

"The Veto Mayor" of Buffalo in the Presidency exercised his power to check abuses and extravagant expenditures with the same decision that had previously characterized his administration. During the first session of the Congress which met next after his inauguration he vetoed one

Gray Gables, Mr. Cleveland's Summer Home at Buzzard's Bay.

hundred and fifteen of the nine hundred and eighty-seven bills that had passed both Houses and were laid before him. Of these one hundred and two were private pension bills, and others were for the erection of public buildings and for other purposes requiring an outlay of public money. A river and harbor improvement bill, appropriating a vast sum of money, was severely criticised by the President, but in consequence of its voluminousness and the necessity

of some of the appropriations included therein was not vetoed.

In 1888 he was for a second time nominated by his party a candidate for the Presidency against General Harrison, the Republican nominee. There were several candidates in the field, Fisk being the nominee of the Prohibitionists and Streetor of the Union Labor organization. In a total electoral vote of 401, Harrison had 233, and was elected, Cleveland having 168. After his defeat as a candidate for re-election Cleveland took up his residence in the city of New York, where he became engaged in the practice of his profession and continued his successes as a counsellor and attorney. He took very little part in politics during the four intervening years, and by his strict attention to his private business so commended himself to the mass of the Democratic party that in 1892 his nomination seemed to be inevitable. There was, however, a strong and influential element opposed to his nomination, and for a time it seemed as though the convention which assembled in Chicago that year would be rent into irreconcilable factions. But the necessity of Cleveland's nomination gradually appeared to sink into the minds of even his bitterest opponents, and he was chosen standard-bearer for a third time without serious opposition. The Republicans that year nominated General Harrison, and the scenes of 1888, when these two eminent men had been pitted against each other, were repeated. In 1892, as in 1888, the principal

issue was framed upon economic questions, and while the Republicans adhered to a strict protective tariff as the fundamental principle of their political faith, the Democrats put forward the somewhat novel proposition that a tariff for protection is unconstitutional and wrong. On this main issue the contest was fought out to its conclusion. Various subsidiary questions were introduced into the debate, but Cleveland's popularity solidified the rank and file, and all manner of dissensions being composed, the united party went to the polls that year and re-elected him by a larger majority than that which he had secured in 1884. He received 277 electoral votes; Harrison had 145, and Weaver, the candidate of the new party, the Populists, had 22 votes. Of the popular vote, Cleveland had 5,553,808; Harrison, 5,180,911; Weaver, 1,035,572, and Wing, the nominee of the Socialists, 21,145.

It cannot be claimed for Cleveland that he possesses brilliant or conspicuous statesman-like qualities. His popularity is chiefly due to the belief of the people in his stern integrity and in their admiration for the so-called Jacksonian qualities of firmness and devotion to what he conceives to be the best interests of the whole country. All his public services have been characterized by a certain Spartan simplicity and absence of rhetorical parade which have evoked the admiration of the people.

As an orator he is sensible, matter-of-fact, and direct, rather than eloquent. His voice is harsh, and at times somewhat shrill. His manner is

angular and not altogether graceful; but it is the matter of his speeches and public addresses, rather than their style, that commends him to the people and gives him the reputation of a business-like and sensible statesman. In person he is large, florid, and impressive. His personal friendships are not many, but they are warm and

"The Weeds," the Clevelands's Home at Holland Patent, N. Y.

devoted, and his immediate personal following is knit to him by the strongest bonds; through these he has always maintained a firm hold on the affections and esteem of the American people. The most conspicuous event of his second administration has been his convocation of Congress in special session in August, 1893, to consider the financial condition of the country, which at the time of the meeting of Congress

was one of great confusion and depression, almost amounting to panic. The message in which he directed the attention of Congress to existing difficulties was brief, pointed, and business-like, and commanded at once the approval of all patriotic citizens without regard to party affiliations.

During his public life Cleveland has given currency to many notable sayings that will always be identified with his name and services in the cause of good government. As a matter of record some of these are herewith appended :

" Public officers are the servants and agents of the people to execute laws which the people have made, and within the limits of a constitution which they have established."

" Your every voter, as surely as your chief magistrate, under the same high sanction, though in a different sphere, exercises a public trust."

" A true American sentiment recognizes the dignity of labor and the fact that honor lies in honest toil."

" They have proved themselves offensive partisans and unscrupulous manipulators of local party management."

" After an existence of nearly twenty years of almost innocuous desuetude these laws are brought forth."

" It is a condition which confronts us, not a theory."

" Party honesty is party expediency."

" Communism is a hateful thing and a menace to peace and organized government. But the

communism of combined wealth and capital, the outgrowth of overweening cupidity and selfishness which assiduously undermines the justice and integrity of free institutions, is not less dangerous than the communism of oppressed poverty and toil which, exasperated by injustice and discontent, attacks with wild disorder the citadel of misrule."